

 the Circle

WINTER 1979

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Gordon Bugg caught The Circle office shortly after layout.

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A Note On Style

The variety of approaches to writing and design in this issue reflects the *Circle's* function as a laboratory publication. Although each piece was reviewed by staff members and representatives of the Editorial Board, the appearance of any article, story, poem, drawing, or photograph does not necessarily indicate unanimous critical approval.

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INCEST

She held it inside for ten years. Finally she was compelled to tell this true story of fear, sorrow, guilt and her eventual escape from an incestuous father.

What is a person's usual reaction when the subject of incest is raised? Uneasiness, embarrassment, fear, disbelief—or total disinterest. Perhaps that is why incest has finally become recognized by public officials as one of the gravest problems which children (generally girls) face in our country today.

No one seems to have a sound theory as to why a man turns from normal morality to rape his daughter—or sister—or niece. They do know, however, that the scars caused by such an experience remain on a child's mind for life. Some children never completely recover from such an experience.

I don't know all the statistics on incest. I speak about it only from personal experience. I don't know, anymore than anyone else would, what caused my father to rape me when I had just turned nine years old.

To be kind to my parents, I could say that I was a "sheltered" child. To be honest, I was neglected. I hadn't the slightest idea what my father was doing. We had been raised to idolize my father, taught that he was never wrong, and to always obey him without question. Therefore, when he told me not to tell anyone—especially my mother—what he had done, naturally it never occurred to me to tell anyone.

The abuse continued. When I was eleven, I still didn't know what my father was doing to me, but I had somehow figures out that it was wrong. At that time, they didn't teach sex education in the schools—at least, they didn't in Georgia. Not until I was 13 years old did I understand what my father was doing. I finally found the courage to tell him that if he didn't stop, I would tell my mother. He stopped the

physical abuse and began the mental abuse which would eventually drive me to the brink of insanity. He never stopped trying to convince me to go with him until I finally left home at nineteen.

I was thirteen years old: always a shy, reserved, somewhat timid child, lately I had become even more withdrawn. I had no friends, and feared and avoided all strangers. I filled my life with fantasies, and devoted myself to our horses and dogs, as I'd always loved animals. The only way I could find any peace was to ride off into the woods by myself, and for several years, our animals were my only friends.

My mother is a wonderful person. She must be one of the world's kindest, sweetest, and most patient people, and I have never blamed her in the least for what happened to me. In the first place, as the mother of seven children, she had

her hands full. On top of that, she had to keep pace with my father's career as a mechanical engineer, and acted as secretary for my father's various business ventures (all of which failed). I have only the highest regard and a great deal of

As I mentioned, I was an extremely shy child, and after our move to Oklahoma I had few friends. My school-mates avoided me as though I had some kind of disease. They laughed at my way of dressing, of talking, at any of my

'I don't know what caused my father to rape me when I had just turned nine years old.'

admiration for my mother.

As for my family, I am the proverbial middle child. With three older than me, three younger, and a wide variance in ages, I was never close to any of them. I was old enough to babysit for my three younger brothers, but not old enough to join my older brother and sisters in their activities, or to do what I wanted to do. Somehow I was always the one to blame when things went wrong; the one who could never do anything right, and the one who asked the stupid questions. I cannot believe that my mother didn't realize there was something wrong with me, nor can I blame her for deciding I was going through a "phase". Parents are always reluctant to think that their child might have a serious problem, especially a mental one.

As I mentioned, my father was an engineer, a highly-respected one, who has an extremely high I.Q. Outside the family (and only occasionally within) he appears charming, witty, reasonable, and much-liked. To me, in younger years, he was, pure and simply, a devil. Now I pity him, though I will always fear and dislike him.

We moved to Oklahoma when I was fourteen, but my situation did not improve. My father tried every conceivable way, short of actual force, to convince me to go with him willingly. He tried to talk me into it. He tried bribery, tried trickery, even went so far as to try to buy me.

His favorite argument was simply that it was *not* wrong. All 'normal' fathers, he would explain over and over, introduced their daughters to sex. That way, his explanation would continue, when I got older, I would not have to go out looking for sex—I could just remain with the family.

Another of his favorite lines was to start listing my faults. "You're stupid, and ugly, and dull," he would tell me. "You're not at all interesting. No other man will ever want you, so you better take me. I love you anyway, because I'm your father." This argument, which I heard so often for six years, did the most damage as far as my mental state was concerned, for I believed him.

contrived attempts to fit into their narrow-minded society. It utterly escaped me that my own low self-image was to blame. Even the few who were my friends teased me constantly about being dumb, and about my lack of looks, as did my brothers and sisters. I never tried to retaliate. I simply became even quieter, more withdrawn, and what little self-confidence I had was whittled to nothing.

My belief that I was stupid was even greater than my belief that I was ugly. Despite the fact that my grades were always high, that I combined my junior and senior years of school to graduate when I was only sixteen, I believed that I was stupid. When I entered a big journalism contest, won the regional and district competitions to compete at the state level in feature writing, I thought I was just lucky. I never considered that it might be the result of any talent on my part.

Another damaging factor was that I was now old enough to reason things out. In this case, though, I reasoned wrong. My thoughts ran like this: My father was a multi-talented, very intelligent man who was employed by a major corporation. In engineering circles, he was respected, admired, referred to and deferred to. Outside engineering, people responded to him in a like manner. A very self-centered person, my father expected the homage. He must be a wonderful person, I told myself. Everyone thinks so, and the world can't be wrong; therefore, I am wrong. For that reason, I decided that the entire fault somehow was mine. I must have some fatal flaw which caused him to act so terribly toward me, I concluded.

I often wondered whether my father had treated my two older sisters the same way, but I was afraid to ask, and they never raised the subject. I decided that he must not have, or they would have seen to it that he couldn't treat me the same. I never thought that they would have been as bewildered, frightened and helpless as I was.

From the time I was sixteen, my health began to decline steadily, and rapidly. I had a chronically sore, swollen throat,

and developed a hoarse, hacking cough, though I've never smoked. For days at a time, I would be unable to eat, yet gained weight. Though I remained tired and listless all the time, and had no energy, most nights I could not sleep. I did not actively wish to die, but at night I went to bed hoping not to wake up in the morning. I was in an absolute void. There was nothing—not one thing—in the world that I cared about.

We had moved to Florida the summer right after I graduated. (I was sixteen). First at one place, then at another, my father tried to operate resort tennis complexes. It was while we were running the second that I first began to question my beliefs about my father and myself.

My father could no longer control and strictly limit my contacts with men, as he had before. I found, to my immense surprise, that not only did everyone at the tennis courts like me, but that the men considered me quite pretty, as well as talented. The residents went out of their way to invite me to join them in their various activities. Though my father rarely allowed me time off to join them, it was a wonder to me that they sought my company.

For several years, only a grim determination not to allow my father to ruin my life had kept me from giving up entirely. I must have lost sight of that objective, for it was during this time that my illness peaked. At first, I feared leukemia, for I had all the seven warning signs of cancer, plus some symptoms peculiar to leukemia. (Such as the throat infection).

'...abuse which would eventually drive me to the brink of insanity.'

Then, I began to see ghosts, of all things! I started having blackouts. Often, I would start off for town, and miles up the road, find myself not knowing at first where I was or where I was going. It's simply a miracle that I never had an accident. I was convinced that I had finally gone crazy. Understandably, I never mentioned the blackouts, or that I was seeing ghosts, to my family. They would merely have laughed at me, as usual.

Also, at this time, it became apparent that my father's venture had once again failed, and my parents talked of moving. I realized that I simply could not move with the family, but I didn't know how to avoid it. I had been saving every penny I could get for the last two years, and had about \$150.00. (My parents could never "afford" to pay us for

working for them, and my father wouldn't allow us to get jobs elsewhere.) However, I was too scared of my father to just tell him straight out that I wouldn't go with the family.

At this point, I broke a lifelong habit of distrusting and fearing everyone. I told a close friend a refined version of my plight, and her whole family stepped in to help me, knowing only that I wished to remain behind when my family moved. Her mother, a nurse at the local hospital, arranged a doctor's appointment for me through a social services program. I was told that there was nothing physically wrong with me at all. I was, the doctor explained, severely depressed. The only cure was to leave whatever situation was causing the depression. With the help of these friends, when my family left, I remained behind, staying with them for a couple

of weeks. Then, two months after my nineteenth birthday, I went to live with my oldest sister, who was separated from her husband at that time. Free at last, I told myself exultantly.

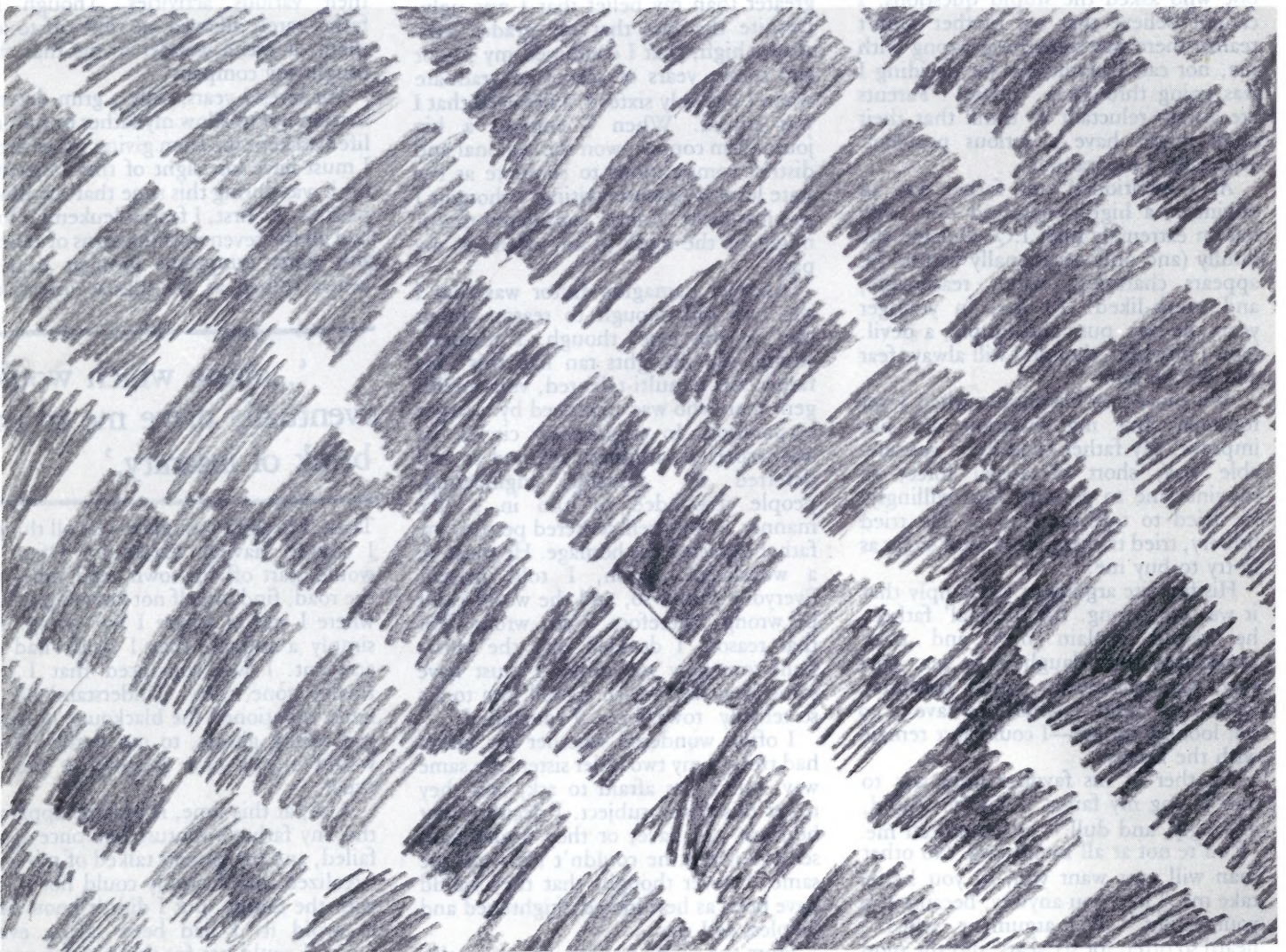
'He was , pure and simply, a devil.'

How wrong I was! Oh, I'm free now from my father's direct influence, certainly. I have come to find that the long-range effects of his abuse was nearly as devastating as the immediate effects. For I am not free of the memories; I am not free of the long years of avoiding, fearing, and distrusting people. I am not free of the years of strictly teaching myself never to show emotions of any

sort, for fear of being laughed at, or fear that I would break down completely if I ever let myself cry, or ever felt sorry for myself. Perhaps I will never be free of these things—to quote a time-worn cliché: "Only time can tell."

Still, I've been away from my family for over a year now, and living by myself for much of that time, ever since my sister went back to her husband. I don't believe that it's an exaggeration to state that I am a completely different person than the quiet, frightened, withdrawn little girl my sister met at the airport. Nor is it an exaggeration to say that I would be in a mental institution, or dead now, had I remained with the family. Looking back, I can realize how bad my mental state really was at that time.

I'll never erase the scars on my mind completely, nor will I ever be able to forgive my father. I can handle the



drawing by Harriett Cloud

memories now, though, and face the situation, instead of blocking it out of my mind as I did for so many years.

I have learned to respond to people, instead of withdrawing when someone makes a friendly advance, and I've learned to like people. (Well—most of them, anyway!) I work as a waitress and part-time cook in a fast-food restaurant. It's work which I enjoy, and am good at.

I'm still not sure of myself, of where I'm going, or what I want to do with my life. At times, I still doubt my ability to make anything of my life, but it is a momentary doubt now, and not the deep-seeded part of me it once was. Usually, I am confident of my ability to handle whatever situation may arise. Though I still dislike being in large groups of people, and feel ill at ease, I'm also mastering that fear.

On looking back, I realize that I *could* have gotten help. I just never knew it. I was afraid that if I ever told anyone, they not only would believe me, but would think I was crazy. There was no way for a frightened young girl to know that thousands of other girls were in the same situation. Then, there was my terrible guilt complex to deal with, for I'd convinced myself the whole thing was entirely my fault. Too, I was so afraid of my father, I was sure that if I should tell anyone, he'd have found some drastic way in which to get back at me. Finally, there was the question of *who* I could have told. Certainly not my kind and gentle mother. She would have been, still would be, incapable of believing my father could do such a thing.

I have no more answers to the incest problem than anyone else. I believe that a chain of centers to help incest victims should be set up, as there are for runaways, drug addicts, and alcoholics. Children need to know that they *can* get help. Counselors in schools should be trained to be alert to the problem, and know how to deal with it. Above all, *parents* need to be informed. Few of them realize how terribly wide-spread the problem actually is. Incest, like a head-on collision, is something that "always happens to someone else—not my family." They would be shocked to learn that it can, does, and has, happened in their family.

A cure for incest? I couldn't say for sure that there really is one. That would involve finding the cause of it, which, with the amazing versatility of human thinking processes, is probably different in each man. Finding a solution for the problem, though, should be a national concern. It is possible to save other thousands of girls the same suffering, heartbreak, and mental stress that I experienced, and possible to save them from the nightmare memories.

Even less pretty a thought...

by Julie Johnson

"Instances of parent-child and brother-sister occur, although they are so hushed up that they do not come to public attention nor do they appear in recorded statistics. Our horror at incest is so great that we like to believe that it does not or cannot occur at all."

—Dr. George Simpson

Incest. It is not a pretty word and it is even less a pretty thought. But with the increase of sexual knowledge and society's awareness of sexual crimes, incidents of incest have come more into the open.

According to 1976 estimates from the National Center on Child Abuse, in the more than one million reported cases of child abuse, 12 percent were sex offenses. Most of these children were girls abused by their fathers or step-fathers.

There are few statistics available for Lee County, although Julie Druhan, supervisor of Protective Services for the Lee County Department of Pensions and Securities, has recently begun to separate and record the numbers. In 1978, there were some 256 reported cases of child abuse in Lee County.

Although the large majority of these cases did not involve incest, according to Druhan, there has been an increase locally in the reporting of sexual abuse crimes.

Incest is defined as sexual intercourse between people who cannot marry because of blood relationship or relationship through marriage. Incest usually involves the nuclear or immediate family, such as the father and daughter, brother and sister, mother and son, although cousins, grandparents, and others may be charged with the act. Intercourse between a stepparent and a stepchild is considered incestuous until the death of the natural parent.

The incestuous theme has its roots in Biblical stories and mythological tales. Our laws against incest are based largely upon Biblical prohibitions.

According to Assistant Professor of Religion John Kuykendall, incest was punishable by childlessness or death when ancient civilized countries had laws against it.

Today, incest is regarded "taboo" in almost all societies. Although the ruling families of Europe practiced incest

centuries ago to keep the royal genes "pure." Geneticists now realize that intermarriage within a family tends to concentrate the genes in a pool, said Charles Rogers, associate professor of psychology.

Rogers added that intermarriage is more likely to combine recessive genes, thus causing physical abnormalities and often mental retardation.

A 1967 study involving interbreeding was done by Adams and Neel, who compared the offspring of 18 nuclear families with those of a control group matched for relevant characteristics. At the end of six months, five of the infants of the incestuous marriages had died, two were severely retarded mentally and had been institutionalized, three showed evidence of borderline intelligence, and one had a cleft palate. Only seven of the 18 infants were considered normal.

Of the 18 control group infants of non-incestuous parents, only two were not considered normal—one showed indications of borderline intelligence and the other had a physical defect.

According to the most recent statistics, brother-sister type incest is the most common, because nearly all children play sexual exploration games. More attention is given to the father-daughter type of incestuous relationship, where the daughter's trust in her father is betrayed and she must become a substitute "mate" for him. Incest involves, in each case, a fine line drawn between where normal playful affection ends and sexual exploration begins.

Dr. Malcolm Gynther, professor of psychology, agrees that nearly all children play exploration games. This is usually considered normal and even healthy for most children, but in families where there are abnormalities in exploratory behavior, incest can be the result, said Gynther.

It is not possible to determine the actual number of incest cases. Because families have considerable reasons for keeping an incest incident quiet, social workers usually know of far more cases than are ever prosecuted in courts.

"Most people seem to think it takes place where there are really sick people involved," said Gynther, who worked in a state mental ward for three years.

During that time he remembered a case involving a middle-aged man who

allegedly had committed incest with his five teenaged daughters on alternating days of the weeks. On weekends, the man rested.

Gynther said that while the patient was not very outgoing or friendly, he was not out of touch with reality.

"It used to be thought that incest happened among people of marginal intelligence from rural areas who were under the influence of alcohol," said Rogers. "But all extended societies have some incidence of incest within the nuclear family."

Rogers said that in most incest cases, the male is almost always the aggressor.

"These men usually have some sense of inadequacy, even though they may be married," he said. "Most incest is not violent. If a man can't go to another adult, then he may approach a child. Sex can be utilized for all sorts of reasons, for reassurance and need."

Gynther agreed. "When a man no longer has a sexual relationship with his wife, for whatever the reason, then he may turn to another love object; his child."

Jerry Roden, an officer on the Council of Lee County Health Complexes, remembered two incest cases he helped counsel while working with Legal Aid.

Both cases Roden worked with went to court. He remembers the experience as particularly traumatic for one young, teen-aged daughter who had to testify about an incestuous relationship with her father before the court.

"The child felt shamed," said Roden. "It was obviously a very traumatic experience for her."

Roden also recalled counseling a situation in which the father who had been drinking heavily, had relations with his teen-aged stepdaughter, and the mother decided to press charges against her husband. The man's supervisor from work tried to intimidate the woman into lying about the story, because he considered the man a valuable employee, even though he had a drinking problem. Eventually, Roden said, the man went to prison.

Ron Myers, Lee County District Attorney, said that he does not prosecute many incest cases. When the case is brought to trial, the identity of the child is protected by the court. In some instances, a man accused of incest may be put on probation with psychiatric counseling required.

Although there is an incest statute regarding legal punishment in Alabama, Myers said his prosecutions are based on Section 13-1-134 of the Code of Alabama, which refers to carnal knowledge or statutory rape. It gives a man convicted of sexual intercourse with his daughter, aged 12-16, whether or not

the girl was willing, between two, and ten years in the penitentiary.

If the girl is less than 12 years old, Myers refers to Section 13-1-133, which states that carnal knowledge or abuse in attempting carnal knowledge can get the offender imprisoned for 10 years to life.

Myers said it depended on the specifics of the case as to whether the mother would prosecute the case, divorce the father or seek psychiatric counseling for the family.

Druhan, supervisor of Protective Services, has been a counselor in several local incest cases. Although Druhan has worked with the more typical kinds of incest cases, including the father-daughter, stepfather-stepdaughter, and brother-sister relationships, she has also worked with the mother-son cases, one of the least occurring types. According to Druhan, mother-son incest is considered to be one of the biggest "taboos" of all.

Druhan talked about a child's reaction to family sexual pressure.

"Families that have a lot of nudity exposure when they have no communication, can cause too much sexual stimulation for a child," she said. "How can a child handle the pressure, or know what is right or wrong in that kind of environment?"

In some instances, the Protective Services Agency learns of incest cases when the hospital calls to report them, after the mother has taken the child to the doctor for medical treatment. For instance, the child may have been physically injured or contracted a venereal disease through sexual contact with a relative.

Other ways incestuous incidents are revealed include when the victim confides in a teacher, a mother or another relative or a friend.

Protective Services will then make a home visit and establish contact with the family, said Druhan. If the child is in no danger of immediate physical abuse, then the child will remain at home.

"Most people are horrified that we don't just yank the child out of the home and move him elsewhere. But it can be extremely traumatic to move a child from his home.

"When an incest victim learns of society's horror of the crime, the child will probably feel a very low sense of self-esteem. His sexual and intellectual development may be affected," she said.

The agency recommends immediate counseling for the family, and if the family cannot afford counseling or transportation services, then both will be provided by the agency.

Druhan also said that a Permissive Reporting Law allows anyone to dial the 24-hour hotline in Opelika, 749-9772, and report an abuse with complete anonymity for the caller. All the information learned is kept confidential.

"We are not going to slam the abuser in jail," said Druhan. "It really depends on how long incest has been going on to determine how serious mentally the family has been affected. Most kids are resilient and can bounce back quickly."

Druhan said that as society becomes more open about sex, there should be a drop in incest incidents. "If a parent begins to make advances, then a child will know enough to stop it," she said.

Druhan added that by making the community more aware of the problems, sexual abuse as well as incest will soon be on the decrease.

The First

The first were alive to the new buds, the unfolding leaves, their deepening green, and their amber and vermilion that came with autumn. The first crossed the clear rivers and sought the green shelters in the virgin stands of pine. They saw the prairies gleaming in the summer sun like the golden backs of horses. They saw the web of colors the birds wove in the undiminished air. They lost themselves in shadows too deep for daylight. And they slept in the quiet, soft darkness—as dark as the intervals of dreams.

—Fred Donovan Hill



9

Teluka

A dark green archway
Spreading not far above
The roof of my car.
Tired limbs try hard to block
The old dirt road with its wash-away bridges
From trespassers.
A couple of miles—seems like more—
Off the country road in search for
Remnants of plantation homes and wooden out buildings,
I pass a few wood and tin shacks with
Rusted orange roofs or moldy green shingled ones.
Some black and tan hounds follow in
The dust behind my car.
A few more wooden bridges behind me,
The boards finally settling back into place
After the disturbance,
And in the leafy green shadows
I notice an old brick two story building hiding.
There are no columns, no girls in long dresses,
Just some dingy laundry on a clothes line
And some broken plastic toys in the yard.
The black and tan hounds mope around
The front porch wondering why I've stopped,
But the chickens continue their nonchalant wandering through
The grassless front yard.
A couple of old cars stand in a makeshift driveway
In step with the character of the place—
The results of this decade on the work of the past.
I drive on down the road in the semi-darkness for a few more miles,
And finally turn onto the paved county road toward home.
I pass through Cotaco with its 3 grocery stores and the Methodist Church
on the corner,
Glimpsing what most visitors
Wrongly assume to be the typical
Rural Alabama community.

—Linda K. McKnight

I've Been There

Unless you've been there and felt the pain,
To say you understand—in vain.
Unless you've been there and saw the night,
Simply cannot love the light.
Unless you've been there and shed the tears,
No way to know my fears.
But my friend, if I can speak,
Just three words for your despair,
I'd say, "I've been there."

—Katheran Moore

Frog Jubilee

Give a little more respect to the frogs
who sacrifice their lives in bogs
for us the "superior" folks
who laugh at their unintelligible croaks.
No one could imagine a frog might utter,
"Martha, where's my fly swatter?"
The frogs are better than us, I guarantee;
they've never been bothered by fly or flea.

Never did an insect fear our helpless cries,
but a frog's croak can terrorize flies.
And we never think of hiring a frog
(relieving him of the pain of some bog
where flies fear croaks
but not us folks)
to rid us of these relentless flies.
Thus, they think they're superior, likewise.

—Anita Raffalovich



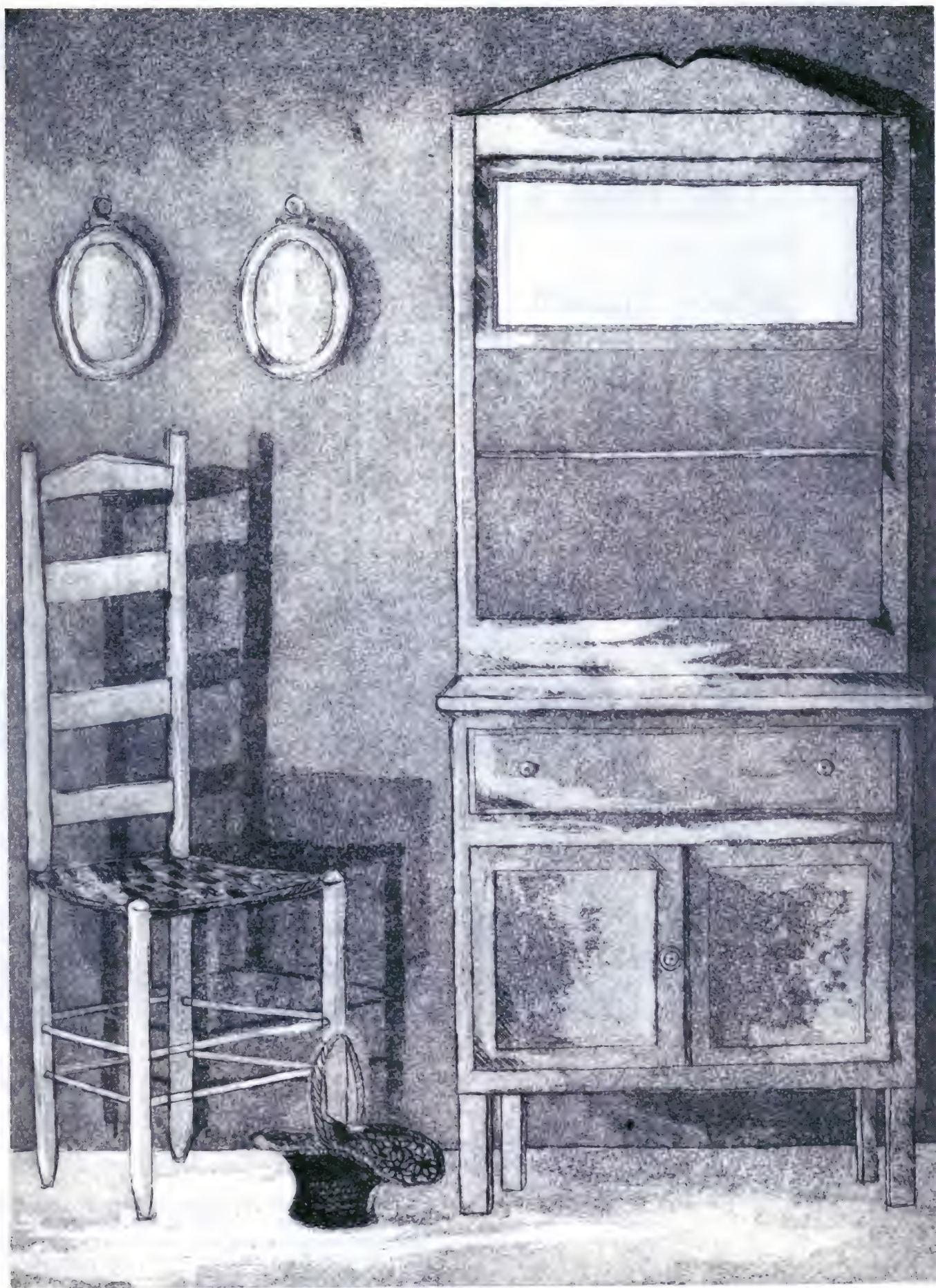
Like a Mondrian without balance,
Because of some misplaced colour,
The blood of the bull that passed so close save once
Marred the powerful colours of his suit of lights.
Waiting for a cab in the rain of a country under different skies,
Where the black death, golden sword, and matador have no meaning.
I often think of him lying on the cold steel table,
Fighting in the dirty infirmary instead of the sun circle.

Linares

—Eric Regh

Fighting as the bull still drives his horn into the thigh.
I think of him in vain; I think of him now and then.
Each year passes by and robs me of another to live,
And I shudder from the cold, as my cab pulls up,
And knowing the certain end.

lithograph by Elaine S. Dellinger



Eudora Welty

The Circle presents a first-hand glimpse at
one of the South's most respected authors.

by Mark Willis

For only one dollar you can ride in the same car that Eudora Welty rode in when the author came to Auburn this past November for the Franklin Lectures Program. No, the professor who chauffeured Miss Welty from Atlanta's airport isn't promoting the deal; the car wasn't his. It's the student whose car the professor used—the academician thought his Capri and his wife's Volkswagen too small and uncomfortable for the trip—who's asking the small charge for the privilege.

So for only one dollar you can ride in the same car, sit on the same cloth seat as Miss Welty. Think how satisfying a short spin in that car would be. Think what a conversational novelty it would provide at the next party. Of course, having introduced the subject, you should be prepared to discuss with any literature major Miss Welty, her writing, and her view of Southern writers.

How can you come to know Miss Welty? Any of the author's books will present you with a standard biography like this one: "A native and resident of Jackson, Mississippi, Miss Welty is generally regarded as one of the finest short story writers of the century. Her works first appeared in the 1930s and include *A Curtain of Green* (1941), *The Wide Net* (1943), and the *Bride of the Innisfallen* (1955), all collections of short stories. She has also written novels, her first *Delta Wedding*, appearing in 1946 and her most recent, *The Optimist's Daughter*, in 1972."

Such a biography might also mention the years Miss Welty studied at the Mississippi College for Women, the University of Wisconsin, and Columbia University. Or it might record the years the writer spent working for a Jackson radio station and writing society news for

a Memphis newspaper, and those years spent writing for the Works Projects Administration.

But such a biography seems inadequate in describing Miss Welty, for it is lifeless, cold while the writer herself is animated and personable. A fuller rendering of the writer is needed.

"Miss Welty still has a lot of zip," Dr. Eugene Current-Garcia says in introducing the writer during the second day of the lectures. "Zip" aptly describes Miss Welty. (As an aside, "zip" also describes Dr. Current-Garcia who at age 70 is being forced by state law to retire from teaching. The tenth anniversary Franklin Lectures Program is dedicated to the Hargis Professor of American Literature.) "Zip" suggests a certain liveliness which is evident when you speak with the writer. Ask her a question, and she responds as if you were the only person in the room with her at that one moment in time, as if answering your question were her only concern. Her azure eyes illuminate the listener, yet it is her words that illumine Miss Welty.

"I still think that a Southerner as a writer... has got a sense of narrative because of living through what he's been through."

On the day that she's to read publicly one or two of her short stories Miss Welty meets with students and faculty members in the Eagle's Nest to answer questions. Some have brought volumes of the author's works for her to autograph; others carry in cassette recorders to catch her every word and breath; all are fascinated by the elderly woman they have met in stories and novels.

Miss Welty has only an hour before her public reading, so the questioning begins immediately. The first questioner asks if Southern writing has suffered with the growing industrialism in the region, and if the traditional basis of Southern writers is being undermined. Miss Welty answers:

"I really believe that the face of the South is changing. But you can't live without change. Whether you call it progress or anything else, life changes as time goes by, and to deny that is useless and silly. You can't make up a fact that things still exist when they don't. But these are physical things, and I think of taking into consideration along with that a real sense of what brought it about and also what still does remain in the attitude toward life. Just in how it affected character, sensibility or something that came from the place to begin with, which is a kind of framework through which you can look at what it going on now and put the two together in your mind. But I think it's just like a facelift—the person inside is the same person, has the same eyes looking out.

"The knowledge that is gained by living, I think, is experience plus social condition. I still think that a Southerner as a writer, or a writer as a Southerner, has got a sense of narrative because of living through what he's been through. And I think it's just inherent for a Southerner to look at things in a certain way. And whether you want to call that regionalism or anything else, it doesn't matter.

"I also feel that someone who is called a regional writer is not limited. Someone asked yesterday, 'If a writer is appealing to universal feelings, or writing about universal experiences, would that obliterate the regionalism?' I think the opposite, because I think any regional writer that is truly regional and true to what is seen—that is, an honest piece of

work—will automatically speak to all human beings, and if it doesn't, it's not any good as regional writing or anything else. I think it has to have a larger reference to be any good. Far from hurting the regional writer, I think it's his aim to speak to mankind in general and all human beings in general.

"Although things are changing, we do essentially make things—the character, the color, the point-of-view—that we use to look at things that is still colored by our characteristics of being interested in the narrative content. We

"I really believe that the face of the South is changing. But you can't live without change."

see many generations of families that give ideas for a story. You know of your grandparents, your parents, and your children, so you can watch things develop. We still have that attitude, even if families are dispersing and moving away. There's that great organ called the memory which I believe Southerners have always used."

"How do you write?" an English professor wearing a beard asks. "Do you sit down at your desk at eight o'clock and write until twelve?"

"I don't write at unless I have a story to work on."

The professor asks another question: "Do you read criticism of your own work?"

"I have read some things that have been very valuable, but I don't read everything. I'm always reading book reviews."

William Stryon, another writer originally from the South who is answering questions with Miss Welty, interjects: "I don't read many of the newspaper reviews."

"I'm too curious," the older writer says. "Anyway, other people can't help you write. But you want to know what other people think."

Another professor from the ninth floor, a Shakespearean, asks Miss Welty if the writer is reflecting more than one type of Southerner and Southern experience in her works. "Is this something you think about?"

"Oh, yes very much so," Miss Welty says, "because as we all know there isn't such a thing as one type of Southerner. They're individuals, everyone of them, with different habits, ways of speech, history, everything. I lay my stories in the part of the state, or part of society that will enact what I'm trying to say."

A normally taciturn professor asks, "Miss Welty, do you make any funda-

mental distinction between a black character and a white character?"

"I depict characters from the inside, in which there is no such thing. But, of course, I try to put myself inside the skin of all my characters. Where I've been told that no white person can be inside a black person, my feeling is that to get into anyone else's skin is rather miraculous—you can only do what you can. I don't let sex, or race, or age deter me from trying to feel the emotions as this person has been doing. So, naturally, their exteriors are conditioned by race, sex, and age which you have to observe, but when I think of the characters I think of their minds and hearts and what they're feeling, and I can feel just the same as they can feel—I hope."

A student asks the author about the allusions that she uses in her stories.

"I don't mind using allusions to anything if they help the story. I do that all the time. I don't mind using any classical allusion, or fairy tale, or folk allusion. I think that it's in the air around us, and it's legitimate to take it. If it belongs to the subject matter, then okay. If it doesn't, then it's not worth a darn, is it?"

"What does it mean to you that people in colleges are studying your work, that people are growing up on your works?" a reporter for the local newspaper, equipped with camera and cassette recorder, asks.

"I'm very thrilled. It's very gratifying and also very instructive, because it's refreshing and helpful to me to know

"We all know there isn't such a thing as one type of Southerner."

what young people think of my work. I realize that many things that I wrote in my early stories must seem very out-of-date to you now, since relations between people, especially race relations, were so different from what they are now. And some people have asked, 'When are you going to face the present?' A writer faces the present at all time. When I wrote *that* was the present. I have to take into consideration that there are many things I've written that I should go back and explain to my young readers."

"Like what?" someone asks.

"Well, I was thinking of reading that story 'Powerhouse'—I may read it later. I'm thinking about it. It's a story about a black performer based on a real person. It's not a story about the person, but just a figure based on that person. It's a story which happens when the black performer goes and plays at a so-called 'white dance' in a Southern town. That wouldn't exist anymore, you'd just go and perform. But in those days they'd

give a black concert and a white concert in the same town. You couldn't go to each other's, except I used to sometimes get invited to the black's dance. And see, That's one of the factors that affects the story. That's the way life was then. And I think the main thing I'm writing about—the life of the travelling artist—would not alter, no matter what the circumstances were. But the main things that I used to show it—not the main thing but the perimeter—are all outdated. Well, I asked myself does that change the story? I don't believe it does, because the core of the story remains the same."

One literature instructor comments that when her students had read the story they saw the conflict as a universal tension between the races.

"No, no, that's not it at all," Miss Welty says.

The author is asked which writers influenced her, and she replies: "I just read everything, I like everything. It's hard to go back and know these things. They help you so subconsciously, really."

"And some people ask, 'When are you going to face the present?' A writer faces the present all the time."

Everyone writes a different way, and I was not one of those who consciously modelled myself on somebody else and tried to be taught that way—which is a very good way. But it wasn't my way. I still feel—and hope I'll always feel—that the work itself is teaching me as I go on. I can keep learning and keep on finding out how to try to get a better piece of work.

"It's very hard work for me. I work terribly hard. But I love it, because I love stories. It's something you probably do for the love of the thing, wanting to make a story. I just love it."

The question-and-answer hour with Miss Welty is nearing its end, yet the inquiries continue. "You did your shorter works first and your longer works later," the Shakespearean says. "Is that a process you understand, or did it just happen that way?"

"I don't know. I suppose it's a combination. I never thought of why. It's probably a combination of experience having taught you so many different ways to say things, and so many things can be explored and developed—plus getting older and maybe not being in such a hurry. And also maybe I'm too easy on myself about cutting—maybe I

don't whack as much as I should. It's probably all subjective reasons.

"But also writing itself seems so much more complicated as you get older, and you learn that there's so many ways to show the enormous flexibility and complexity and changing and so on of any experience. And you probably reflect that."

As Samford Tower tolls ten o'clock, the professor with the beard asks Miss Welty which young Southern writers she most admires.

"There're a good many that I do admire. Some of the writing I don't understand, but I feel an enormous vitality and inventiveness in the work. I believe Harry Crews is good, although I think he's gone to such strange horror binges that unless he gets back a little more in to the general stream he's going to distort what he's trying to do. Now I think he can do it."

"He gets into that deep Gothic," Mr. Styron says.

"He gets into that deep Gothic," Miss Welty agrees, "and I can go just so far with that. But that's just personal taste. Oh, he's got something."

"Definitely," Mr. Styron says.

As the gathering breaks up, several ask Miss Welty to autograph copies of her books, and she does so obligingly. Although she's to read publicly in less than a half-hour and has little time to rest before her reading, the writer poses for pictures, leaning against the railing of the observation deck of Haley Center, with Samford Tower in the background. A group of students, their backpacks slung over their shoulders, watch from a distance.

Accompanied by the Shakespearean, Miss Welty walks up Thach Avenue to the Foy Union Building. Faculty members and students pass the renowned author as if she were just another visitor on campus.

Her renown, however, has assured a large audience at the reading of her short stories, and the exhibition lounge spills over with people. There are not enough chairs, but many people prefer to stand in the rear of the room rather than watch Miss Welty read over a video system which has been set up. Watching the author on television cannot compare with actually being in the same room. The camera and screen cannot transmit Miss Welty's vitality.

Faced by the large crowd, the video camera, and the bank of cassette recorder, Miss Welty begins reading "Keela, the Outcast Indian Maiden."

"One morning in summertime, when all his sons and daughters were off picking plumbs and little Lee Roy was all alone, sitting on the porch and only listening to the screech owls away down

in the woods, he had a surprise." In the middle of her reading of the story, Miss Welty is interrupted by a p.a. announcement calling for someone in the UPC. Miss Welty stops, looks up bewilderedly, and asks: "Is that for me?" Everyone laughs, telling her no. "Is it coming from here?" she asks, pointing to the microphone around her neck. It's happened to me before." She continues reading.

"'Hee! hee! This from Little Lee Roy softly."

"'Tell me again,' said Max, and just from his look you could tell that everybody knew old Max. 'Somehow I can't get it straight in my mind. Is this the boy? Is this little nigger boy the same as this Keela, the Outcast Indian Maiden!'"

Miss Welty's soft, melodious southern Mississippi accent draws the audience forward upon the edges of their chairs. Her words enthrall the audience. At the end of her reading the applause is long and loud.

As compared to the morning readings by Miss Welty, the events of the afternoon are anticlimatic. Two literary critics present papers, one of which explores the iconography of the South and how new icons reflect a changing set of values. To the critic, the new icons represent evidence of a moribund South. Miss Welty is asked to comment, and her words seem almost a credo of her writing.

"I think that any regional writer that is truly regional and true to what is seen-- that is , an honest piece of writing work-- will automatically speak to all human beings..."

"What I kept thinking throughout all of this is that when we write we try to make a piece of work that is alive. And so icons come into existence through a work, or after a work, but they're not there to start with, in some respects. I don't mean to sound facile and on-the-surface, because I don't mean that at all. It's just hard for me to express it.

"But I think that unless a work of art is alive, and it's not a monument, and it's not an icon, if it's not living then it's not a work of art, really. It's nothing that communicates with us. I was thinking *As I Lay Dying* is all about death, but have you ever read a story that's more alive than that story? It's the story that's alive."

With a shrug of her shoulders, Miss Welty ends her comments by saying, "I wish I were more eloquent." The audience believes her eloquent enough, and applauds.

Thus prepared to discuss Miss Welty and her writing you can now confidently introduce into conversation the subject of your having ridden in the same car as the author. It's quite a piece of memorabilia for only a dollar. But since the car isn't emblazoned with bumper stickers drawing attention to its fame and since its owner hasn't advertised the bargain in the classified ads of *The Plainsman*, you might need a hint in order to find the famous car. Look for a Galaxie driven by an English major with red hair, the student with pockets spilling over with bills.

The Light

They began their journey at the front of the mountain, the back of their agony. It was the height of the infantry season: men lay everywhere, mown like grass. The purpose for travel was an accurate body count, but dying surpassed all counting. Things were getting worse, and no computer could help them. Calculators gave up without a battle. Nothing could march like the dying. Death was the only act in town and the cemeteries covered the greatest cities. It was then that the wheel of light grew in the sky. It whirled over the mountain where the last battalion began its maneuvers. No one believed it could be anything but the latest weapon. They all shot at it but nothing could knock it down. When the last body crumbled, there was still the light.

—Fred Donovan Hill

Trapped in a Bottle of Beer

"Help," he cried
But no one could hear
Mike was imprisoned
In a bottle of beer

His friends looked around
But something was wrong
Mike was here last night
And now he's gone

He pounded on the glass
But his friends were still high
Surely they would see him
Before the day goes by

"I guess he went home;
He was pretty messed up,"
Said one of his friends
As he sipped from his cup

Mike became frightened
He felt like the trash
He fell to his knees
And hit with a splash

His frown marked the anger
His waist marked the beer
His head felt the pain
His sweat showed the fear

His yells were too soft
To escape his cage
Mike started to shake
In a fitfull rage

He perked up as he heard

His friends talking of trash
"Let's clean up these bottles
And hide all the stash"

His voice started cracking
As bottles fell away
"Oh please, God," Mike mumbled
"Let them look thisaway!"

Then as always from parties
Mike's friends became sick
"Let's clean up tomorrow,
My stomach's too thick."

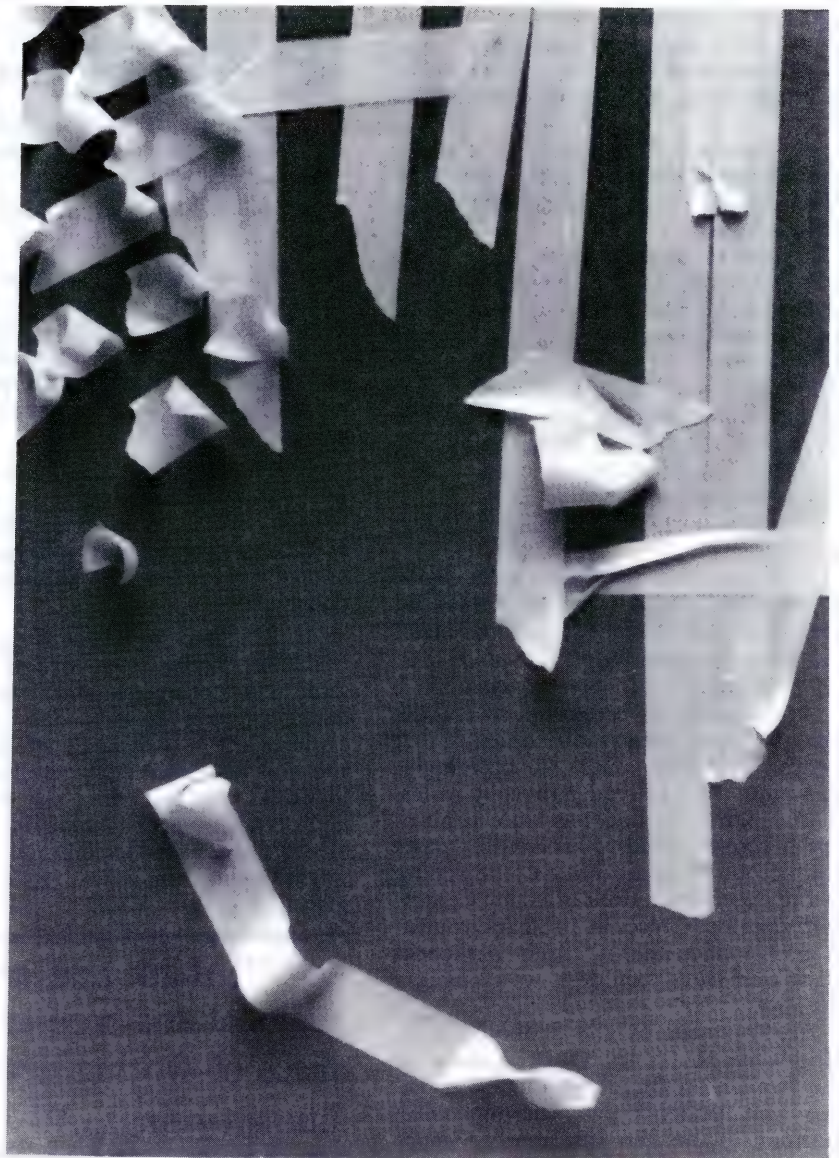
So with a sigh of relief
Mike started to sit
He gazed up at his friends
Through the top of his pit

But when one of his friends
Pointed Mike's way
Mike stood up with a smile
And shouted "Hooray"

Another moved toward him
As he attempted to hear
"Hand me that empty
Shlitz bottle of beer."

"I've had a rough night
I woke up too abrupt
Quick hand me that bottle,
I've got to throw up!"

—Chuck Anschutz





ink drawing by Rebecca Hockman



photo by Harriett Cloud

Three Bad Chords

by Amy Dawes

Opal plunged her fat sponge into the bucket of fragrant washwater and dragged it across the front window of the Dixie Cafe. The water dribbled down her freckled arm and up the sleeves of her white service uniform, and the sponge made greasy rainbows on the window. She had been sent outside because Mr. Zilmer had come in and caught her being insolent to the late Saturday-dinner customers. He thought he was punishing her, but now she was outside dawdling and singing a pop radio tune in the last sunshine, while Doris inside had to close up. Opal was pretending she was an actress in a movie, and the warm sun on her neck was the hot camera lights...

One block down, Darryl Weaver thrust the last fifty-pound

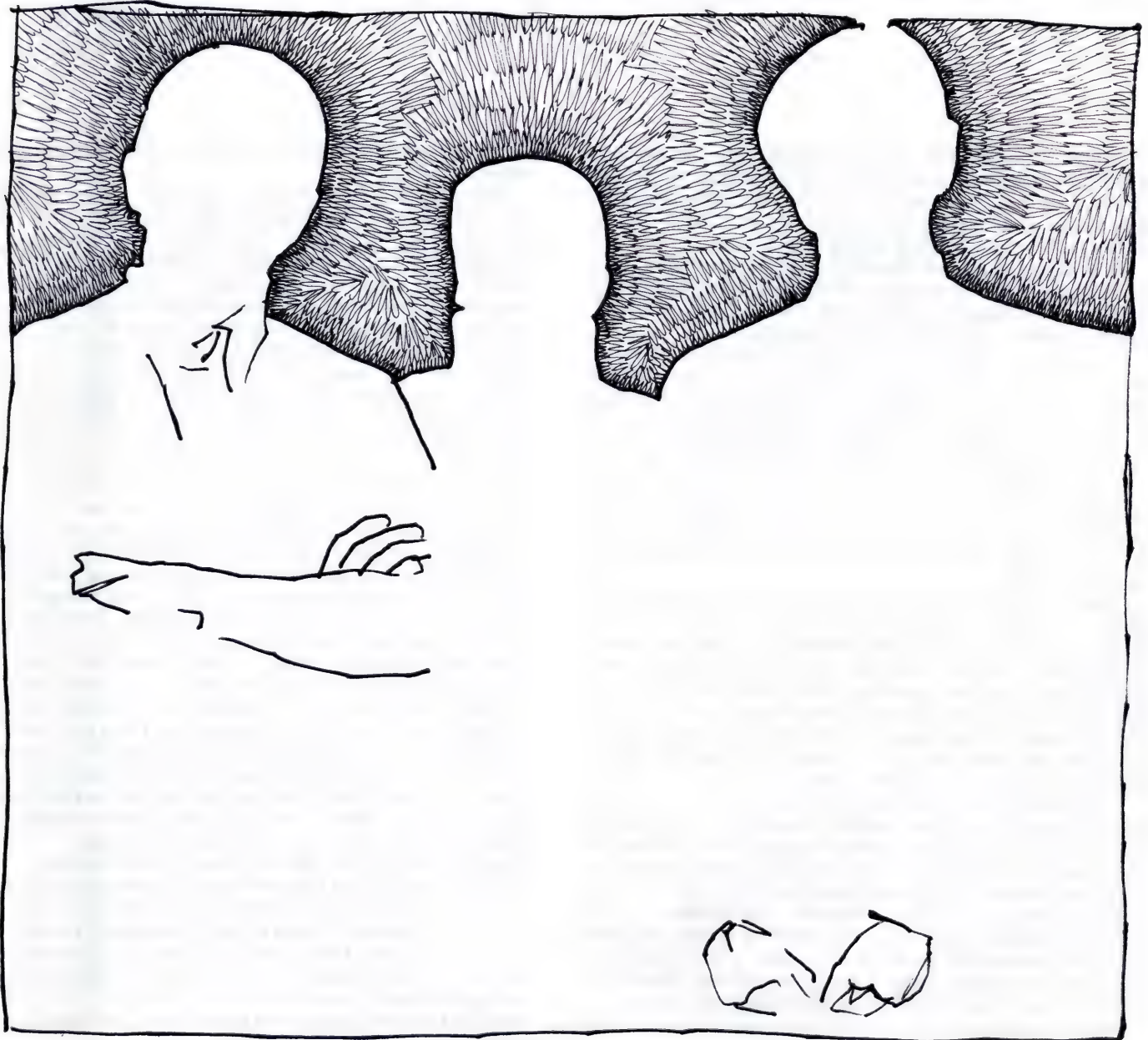
feed sack up into Felix's arms and wiped his brow with a red shirt-sleeve. Felix laid it carefully in the truck bed and turned to face Darryl eagerly. "We all done, Darryl?" he asked, face shining.

"Course we are," Darryl replied crossly. "You don't see nor more, do you?" He went to the front of the truck and crouched down so he could peer into the side-view mirror while he slid a pocket comb through his hair.

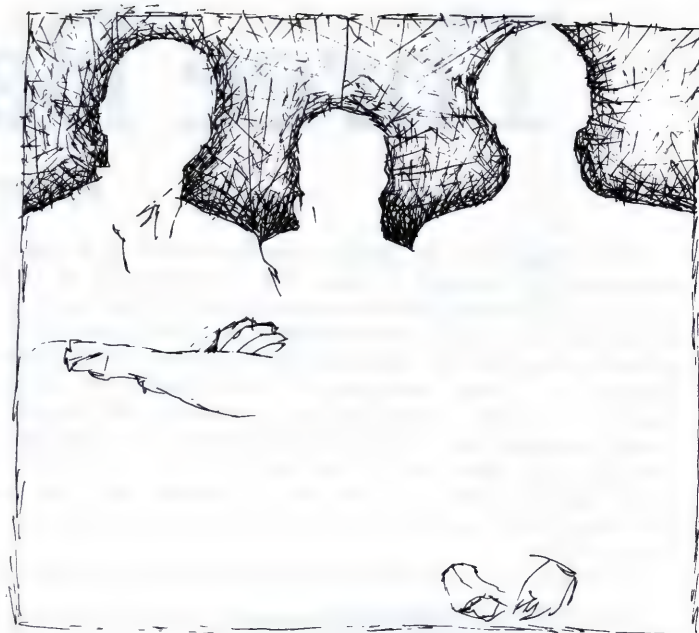
"Gonna get a beer, Darryl?" Felix asked eagerly.

"Yep," Darryl replied, shining his belt buckle with his shirt sleeve.

"Gonna see a girrrll?" Felix asked with delight, bouncing his grinning head up and down.



illustrations by Lloyd Malone/Chris Payne



"Mebbe," Darryl said. Then he straightened up, winked at Felix, and made the same crude comment about women he always made before he went to the bar on Saturday night. Felix didn't know what it meant, but he knew it was a joke, so he laughed compatibly and eagerly with Darryl.

Then Darryl slammed the tailgate shut on the truck, and Felix felt a panic in his stomach, for he had something new to ask Darryl this Saturday. "I go with you, Darryl?" he cried. Darryl laughed, and Felix laughed happily, too.

"Course not," Darryl said Sharply. "I don't want to go with no retard." And he spun on the heel of his boot and strode off up the street. Halfway there he turned to see Felix staring after him as if he had shot his dog. Darryl thought of what his father would say, and he walked back to the truck. "Felix, you gotta stay here and mind this stuff," he said. "And if I's as big as you are, I guess that'd be my job." Felix looked at him and nodded, but something in his eyes said he would not forget. When Darryl was gone, Felix took out his shiny harmonica, hunkered down against the feed sacks, and started to play.

Opal heard music drifting up the street, strange like a ghost story, and sadder than a broken heart. Something stirred in her soul, and she straightened up and let her sponge splash into its bucket. There, on the corner where the street light glowed in the gathering dusk, she saw Felix, the retarded man from the Weaver farm, playing in the bed of a pickup truck. A crazy man, she thought hopefully. Sittin' right there by himself and playin' straight to me. She felt the thrill of excitement and possible danger.

Felix saw the young girl from the Dixie Cafe, the one that wagged hertail when she walked, standing in the sidewalk and staring at him. He wondered if he was doing anything he ought not to be, and just to be on the safe side, he put his harmonica under his leg and pretended to be asleep.

Opal looked up and down the street. There was no one in particular around. There never was anyone down this far at night. She wondered what could happen if she went down there and Mr. Zilmer came out and caught her. She didn't care. She didn't want to work in his restaurant anyway.

Felix smelled her before she was near, and then he felt her

touch his arm. He looked at her cross-eyed, with his mouth open.

She giggled. "You're silly," she said. "Why don't you play me a song?" He shook his head violently. "Oh, come on," she said. "Just a little one." She touched his leg, and he snatched up his harmonica from under it. "Oh good!" she cried. "I'll sing, and you play!" Felix looked at her suspiciously. Darryl had told him to guard the feed sacks, and maybe this was why. He had never talked to a girl before, except for Mrs. Weaver, and he had no trust in this one whatsoever. He looked anxiously up and down the street, hoping to see Darryl, but he was nowhere in sight. When the girl touched his leg, again, hot confusion flowed through his body, and he put the harmonica in his mouth and started to blow.

Opal opened the tailgate and settled herself comfortably on it. The music coming from the harmonica was strange and disjointed, the chords tumbled over each other and broke off suddenly, and the sharps and flats clashed and struggled. Opal didn't notice, she knew only that it was sad, and kind of pretty if she didn't listen too closely. She thought Felix almost handsome in the cover of twilight. She patted her hands on her knees and hummed, and felt that she could sit there and pretend all night. "I don't know why some folks say you should be put away somewhere," she said absently. "You're a real nice guy." Felix shut his eyes and played.

Doris came out the front door of the Dixie Cafe with her mouth set in a firm line. Despite the warmth of the evening she had a blue cardigan buttoned over her shoulders. She sidestepped the abandoned washbucket and walked briskly down the street. When she approached the two in the truck, she arched her eyebrows reproachfully at Opal. "I left the floors for you to do," she said, and she went home.

Darryl was in a black mood when he came out of the corner lounge. It was only nine o'clock, he had met no women, and the bouncer had asked him to leave for starting an argument with his bragging. He had had time enough for more than a few drinks, though and he stopped short and questioned his eyesight when he saw the two in the truck. Was that the two-bit Alverson girl who had stood him up last week? No, he



saw that it was her little sister. Gum-cracking sixteen-year-old snot. Everything that was misdirected in him rose to meet the situation.

Felix was overjoyed when he saw Darryl coming down the street. He was tired of playing and his cheeks hurt from blowing, but Opal would not leave him alone. Besides that, she was sitting too close to him and making him nervous, and she kept saying things that didn't make any sense. Just as he was on the verge of getting upset, he saw Darryl coming. Now, he thought, Darryl would take him home so he could play with the dogs and watch TV with Mrs. Weaver. But when Darryl sauntered up, he didn't even look at Felix.

Opal couldn't believe her luck when she saw Darryl Weaver walking arrogantly down the street, and she realized she was sitting in his truck. She thought that this was a charmed evening. When Darryl got all the way up to her, he stopped, hooked his thumbs in his belt loops, and cocked his head. He was weaving slightly as he squinted at her. "Well now, ain't this a treat," he said. "Beauty and the beast." Opal involuntarily shrieked with laughter, and Darryl laughed slowly and unhumorously. Felix shifted uncomfortably. He didn't like Darryl's tone of voice. He looked up and saw bats circling the streetlight.

"Darryl Weaver," said Opal. "How can you talk about your friend that way?"

"My friend?" said Darryl. "Ain't mine. My daddy's pet's what he is. And ain't you got anything better to do than spend Saturday night with a mo-ron?"

Opal stiffened defensively. "Better than the things I hear some folks do on Saturday nights, some folks who got only one thing on their minds," she said daringly.

"Just who you talking about?" Darryl demanded. There was menace in his voice.

"Well, I think my sister told me about a Mr. Darryl Weaver and the way he forgets his manners on a date."

"Your sister's a whore."

"She is not!" Opal's eyes blazed.

"Like hell she's not, and you wanna grow up and be just like her. Is that what she's been bothering you about, Felix, huh boy?" He nudged Felix roughly in the shoulder. Felix

went rigid, and his eyes rolled white.

"He's been playing songs for me!" Opal cried.

"Songs! He don't know any songs! Do you Felix? Go on, play me one then! Play me a song, Felix, boy!" He was standing too close to Felix and shouting at him, with breath like whiskey. Felix grabbed up his harmonica and began to blow fiercely, chaotically, just three chords, three bad chords that crashed into each other, ruined each other, and seemed to scream over and over, "Let me be!"

Darryl roared with laughter and grabbed at the harmonica. Felix knocked him to the pavement with one blow of his fist. When Darryl lifted his head, all he could see was red. He slid his knife out of his boot.

When Mr. Zilmer emerged from his tiny, book-cluttered office in the back of the Dixie Cafe, he heard an off scritch-scratch sound coming from the corner of the darkened restaurant. He walked to the center of the floor and saw Opal down on her hands and knees with a scrub-brush.

"Opal?" he said in amazement. It was anything but like her to be working after hours. She did not reply, but when she looked up at him, he thought she looked for all the world like a grown woman, so absent were the usual childish characteristics. He walked over and turned on the light, and he saw that she was crying. The front door of the restaurant was ajar. Mr. Zilmer stepped out into the street.

Darryl Weaver was lying on the pavement next the truck. Mr. Zilmer thought he had passed out. He went to him, and saw that his face looked blue in the yellow glare of the streetlight. When he tried to wake him and got no response, he grew alarmed. Then he saw that Weaver had been strangled. Zilmer stood there immobile for several minutes. There was no one in the street. Then he heard a whimpering from the truck bed. He grasped the edge of a feedsack and pulled with all his strength. The retarded man from the Weaver farm lay curled up under his burlap fortress. Mr. Zilmer went inside to call the police. The harmonica glittered where it lay in the gutter.

dining out

downtown at the solitaire inn and lounge
thoughts of a too-recent woman
intrude between the salad and the main course,
spilling wine into my lap.
my date apologizes for me
to the waiter who may be a clone
of her ex-husband. i am confused
by a famous state of mind,
like a man one-armed overnight.
between the smiles that cross her face
on the way to somewhere else,
my date bemoans the falling dollar.
meanwhile, under the table, i search for the cork
that must belong between her lips.

—A.J. Wright

Since All Things Are Covered

certain men
have scruples
about things

some leave
a woman
if her breasts
are too small

or if her rear
is too loose

I leave
a woman
for the way
her legs look

—Dean Wiseman Golden



mezzotint by Martin Buchanan



etching by David Johnston



Feel

there's a certain warmth
in lighting a shaded lamp
on a winter's night

—Dean Wiseman Golden

Enchantment

Rub against my abdomen
Stroke my thigh
Lick my face
Watch me fly

—Anne Johnson Leech

drawing by Jeff Stroud

Death

When still a child
the goodness of a cowboy
by the whiteness of his horse
and the notches on his gun
were obvious to any passerby.
and I never wondered
how the Frankenstein monster felt,
when the villagers stuck the torch
into the monster's eye,
and death was just a word
that meant to die.

I pictured death like Bergman
evil cloaked in black
with dragon's breath,
who aloft huge bats would fly—
scorching flame, reptilian eyes, rotting flesh,
evil, terror—
this was death.

This was how it would be to die
and I was terrified.

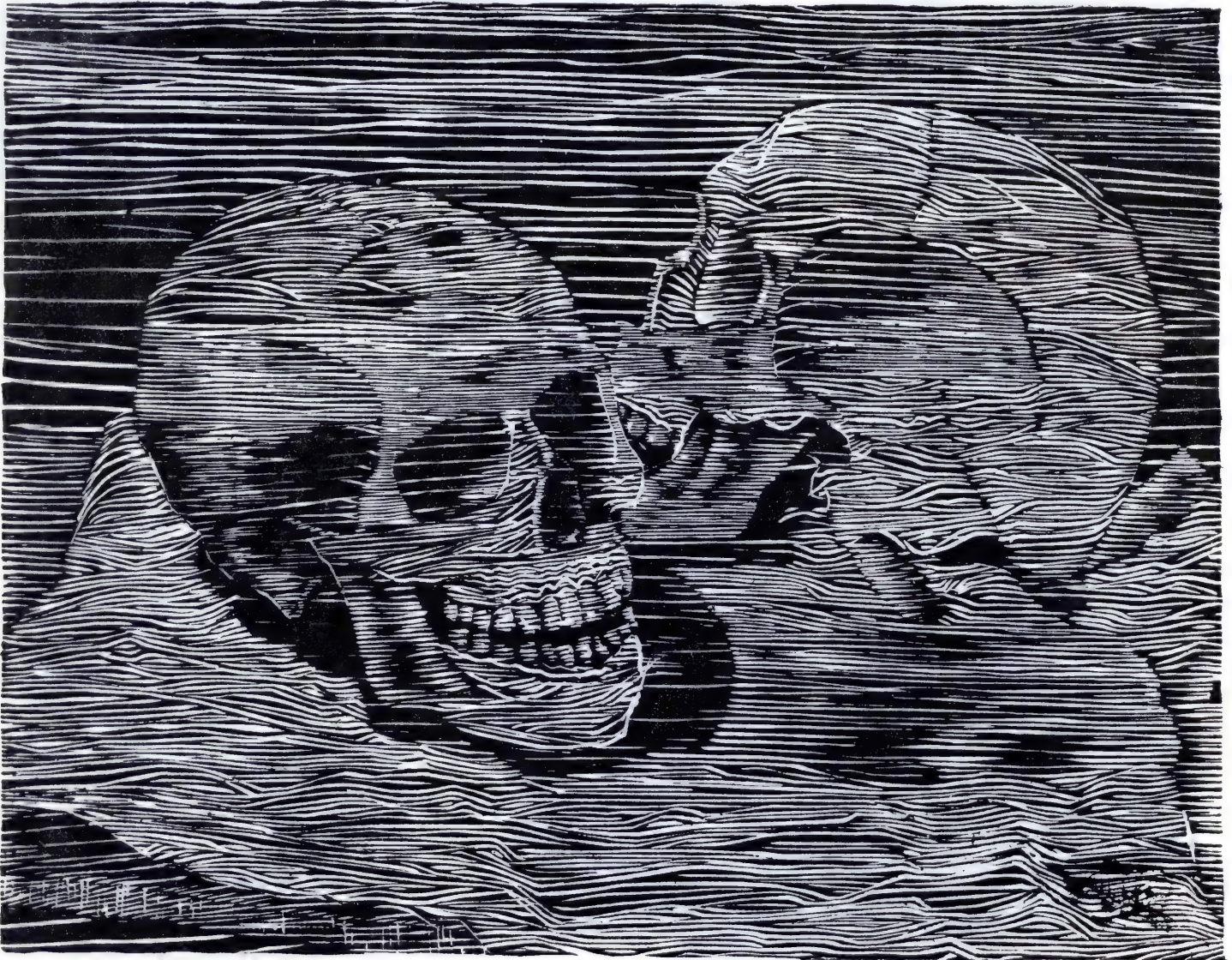
Pirates are all gone now.
Wars reap more blood than glory
and when I see cowboy movies
I think of Indian widows.
Death too has changed.
For I have met her,
while she visited my friends.

No traveller in demon fire
she travels in a cloak of cool logic
that smells of antiseptic lobbys.
Not by terror,
but with peaceful promises
like a craftily logical lover.

Smiling smoothly,
she whispers:
"Give in. Give in,
and sleep with me serene
Lie with me and all will be alright
Please don't make a scene
or put up a fight
for it's foolish and unbecoming."

Yes, death was different
when I was a child.
It seemed so dark,
savage and wild.
But now I have seen death,
naked of her childlike-lore
somehow she terrifies me
so much more.

Rick Harmon





etching by Julia Taugner

“Prepping Out To The Max”

It may be the extent of the resemblance, but preppies are every bit as faddish as their “hippie” predecessors, and their distinguishing characteristics bespeak the times we live in.

by Caroline Nutter

For those of you who still insist that “Saturday Night Fever” is nothing more than a temperature acquired after kissing your flu-stricken boyfriend on Friday, it is comforting to know you are not alone in your abhorrence of America’s new-found craze—Discomania.

Yes, there is life beyond Studio 54, and it swings with all the intensity of John Travolta’s hips. This lifestyle, however, is not evident on busy city streets.

Instead it pulsates quietly on the American college campus under an umbrella label called “Preppie.”

Even Auburn, notoriously reluctant to adopt fads, has elected to include the preppie coalition in its carnival of character types.

At first glance, preppie may appear to be simply the distinct, conservative opposite of disco, but look again. The term originally used to describe only those who attended classy college preparatory schools, is presently the victim of flagrant overuse by university students. Clearly, it is time we defined the individual classifications of preppie and created more specific terms to distinguish among them.

For the benefit of those who unfortunately bypassed “preppiedom” or perhaps are new to the movement, several easily recognizable sub-categories have been devised. As you bop (preppie lingo) along the concourse, see if you can spot any of the following:

Hard Core Prep (HCP): These individuals are the true preps at Auburn who actually attended private high schools. When asked what propelled them into preppiness they’ll shrug their Oxford-cloth-clad shoulders and tell you that they just don’t know any better. The HCPs travel in small, khaki flocks and seldom, if ever, stray from the group. Long after the preppie fad is gone at Auburn, the HCPs will continue to dress, act and think as they always have.

HCP males generally adhere to a conservative uniform. An Izod LaCoste shirt underneath a heavily starched oxford-cloth buttondown is the mark of an HCP who takes his preppiness very seriously. Usually coupled with crisp khaki pants, the HCP male supports his clean-cut look with one of three basic types of preppie footwear: the penny loafer (primarily reserved for sunny days), the Sperry Topsider (known to preps as just Siders), and the L.L. Bean Duckhunter. (Designed with the rugged outdoorsman in mind, these gems, or gums as they’re sometimes called, are

perfect for sloshing through the aftermath of an Auburn rainshower.)

Absurd as it may seem to the non-preppie, the Hard Core Female sports a wardrobe which imitates her male counterpart. Khakis, LaCostes and Duckhunters fill her closet also, in addition to a rainbow of monogrammed sweaters, cloth-covered purses and ribbon weave belts.

The true HCP girl wears very little makeup and tends to tie her sun-streaked tresses back in ribbons or frame her face with a complimentary headband. Although the HCP girl usually owns a sparkling stash of gold jewelry, she knows that economy of glitter is the key, and she opts for wearing the add-a-bead necklace, Monet earrings and gold bangle bracelets every time.

In a word, all Hard Cores reflect simplicity. Well, er, that is, unless they have emerged from the HCP cocoon with the insatiable desire to be noticed wherever they go. If this is the case, watch out, you’re probably dealing with the Obnoxious or Goodwill variety of Hard Core.

Obnoxious Prep: Male or female, the OPs give themselves away with their bizarre color combinations, most notably hot pink and lime green. Blind to the ancient Greek dogma of “nothing to

excess," these preppie specimens find it difficult to conserve in any way.

The OP girls find it physically impossible to spend less than a fortune on a Lilly Pulitzer wardrobe, and will skip classes in order to make it to Americus for a Tog Shop sale. When they tire of their obnoxious clothing, the OPs turn to obnoxious conversation.

Once the OPs start to let the preppie lingo fly, it's imperative that the outsider locate his preppie dictionary immediately so he won't miss a minute of conversation that is splashed with as much color as the paisley golf pants on the participants. In the words of an OP—their lingo is "the max."

A cardinal rule of the OP is never say anything that can't be better muttered in initials or cut-off words. Yes, OPs monogram their speech as well as their sweaters, using such expressions as N.B.D. for no big deal and No Prob to indicate the undertaking of an easy task.

When an OP soils his bright clothes, they are never dirty, but clearly trashed. If he chooses to buy a new outfit, he doesn't charge it. He puts it on "plastic Daddy." The OP male never kisses his date goodnight, he just grubs. If one OP notices a companion dateless at a party he might inquire, "Where's your unit?" Sometimes the OP mistreats his OP girl and if this is the case her friends will tell her that she's definitely been hosed. Everything is excellent and sharp to an OP unless, of course, it doesn't fit the OP mold in which case it will be labeled "nerdish, geekish, dorkish or nubbish." The OP crew delights in partying, but they never drink beer. They go "mountaineering" via the Busch brand which they refer to as shrubs. Any other brand is known as an ale, a brew or a frostie. For some reason, known only to the true OP, one never feels nauseous, he is "clipping Ralph."

Does all of this verbal camouflage confuse you? If so, you'd better sit down and rest for a description of the major OP pasttimes, which will leave you similarly preplexed.

OPs are innately athletic. Infatuated with the art of dance, they feel called upon to leave their mark on posterity's dancefloor. Three basic steps monopolize their movements: The gator (described as revolting by non-preppies) resembles fish flopping about out of water and includes a hopping motion on all fours; the shag, (a modified jitterbug); and the magnetic sandwich, (often mistaken for a 12-person hug.)

Doubtless, you'll have no trouble locating the OPs at Auburn, but there is another type of Hard Core who might slip by unnoticed if you aren't aware of his traits. Beware of the Goodwill Prep.

GPs are a unique blend of your basic





HCP and the class OP. Usually a former HCP, they wander around campus wearing the remains of their thrashed khakis and buttondowns. GP rarely indulges in socks for one of two reasons: 1) he is 20 minutes late to class or 2) he doesn't own a pair. Don't misunderstand; the GP is not inherently grubby, he simply finds himself dependent on the goodwill of his friends when his father is unhappy with his low grade-point and cuts off his steady flow of cash and invalidates the plastic Daddy. Happily, in the event that a GP decides to buckle down and study, he often transforms into a clean-cut HCP or OP after the lapse of a quarter.

The Middle of the Road Prep (MOTRP) strikes an acceptable medium by understating his preppiness. He feels comfortable wearing corduroys and Wallaby shoes with his 100 percent cotton buttondown.

The Misguided Prep (MGP), however,

is in definite need of assistance.

Arriving on campus with the idea that LaCoste is somewhere on the French Riviera and that Duckhunters are wild game enthusiasts, these characters (sometimes referred to as "weird-agents" by OPs) sport an imbalanced preppie attire.

Some surmise that the MGP suffers from a sickness which induces his tacky wardrobe selection. Drawn toward the almighty Topsiders, but obviously unfamiliar with the classic buttondown, the MGP bounds about Auburn wearing his "discofied" gold neck chains and Nik-Nik brand polyester shirts with Topsiders, and possibly, the MOTRO's corduroy pants. If you spot one of these misinformed MGPs in your wanderings around campus, please stop him and give him the score; we should be embarrassed for him.

This brings us to the last classification of preppie, that perennial high school

chameleon, the Psuedo Prep.

This species of prep is the most evident at Auburn and its forces augment daily. Searching for a new image and a place to fit in, the PP becomes aware early, as a freshman, that preppiness is all-important and he works on molding a new image right away.

Everything is preppie to the PP, and if by chance he spots something outside of the preppie norm, he is the first to gasp, "Oh, how disco!"

Embarrassed by the totally inappropriate collection of clothes that his mother picked out so painstakingly before freshman orientation, the PP is often seen slinking quietly from Ware's Jewelers and Below The Knee Sporting Good Store and the add-a-bead necklace and the Duckhunters stashed safely away underneath the opaque brown shopping bag. The PPs are looked at disdainfully by the HCP, but they're happy in their delusion and will remain contentedly preppie until the next fad hits Auburn.





soft ground etching by Julia Taugner



etching by Mary Stets

The Six-toed Veteran And The Venus Fly Trap

by Fred Donovan Hill

It was a silly thing to do, but we were on vacation and I felt like doing something silly. So when I saw the roadside sign which read in black letters on white: VENUS FLY-TRAPS—\$2.00, I pulled the car in beside the plant place, laughing and looking at my wife who got my meaning right away.

"Do you think they really kill flies?" I asked her.

"I think so. They're supposed to," she said.

"Well, hell, let's get one, then. It sounds like a good deal for two dollars."

Just a half-hour earlier we had killed nineteen flies in our motel room on the beach at Panama City, Florida. We had just arrived there for a few days of relaxation and had been greeted by the nineteen flies. Fortunately, the motel provided a fly-swatter made of strong red plastic and my wife took this object and went about the work of killing the flies with a cool efficiency. She is swift and true with a swatter. I held our frightened peek-a-poo while she carried out the massacre.

Having just arrived, we had decided to go out and get some groceries to stock the small kitchen we had gotten with the rented room. That's why we had come upon the roadside plant sale where we now had parked.

"Well, let's go and see what they're like," I said.

"All right," my wife said.

We walked into an area covered by a hot-house roof and lined with potted palms, oleanders, crotons, and many other tropical plants. A large, sweating man of about 55 stood behind a counter with a cash register and a tray of Venus Fly-Traps nearby.

"Can I help you folks?" the man asked.

"We just want to look at your Venus Fly-Traps," I said.

"Help yourself. I've got some nice ones here," the man said, pointing to the tray of traps. They were all rather young plants with their green sprouts, at the top of which was a bland looking little pair of linked ovals with furry feelers on them that apparently could close and encase a fly or some other insect.

"Do they really catch flies?" my wife asked.

"Well, look here," the man said, turning to get something from behind a wooden case. He pulled out a Venus Fly-Trap, larger than those on the tray and show it to us. I could see the dark hulk of dead flies in several of the plant's traps and in

one of them there was the body of a large, fat spider, its limp ashen legs hanging from the trap.

"See," the man said, "This is my wife's plant. Not for sale. But that just shows what they can do.... Whoo-o! There's that smell again. Do you folks smell it? I hadn't been able to find out what it is. It smells like human flesh rotting. You ever smelled a dead human being after he's been lying around for days?... Well, if you have, you'll never forget it. Nothing stinks like human flesh rotting."

My wife wandered away, pretending to look at the oleanders. But I figured she just didn't want to hear this sudden outburst about rotting corpses, especially since she was on vacation and after having just killed the nineteen flies.

"See," the man said vigorously, "I was at Anzio Beachhead. I came in there in the second wave and there were dead bodies of our boys everywhere. And, man, did they stink. Some of them had been layin' dead for days. It's a smell I won't ever forget. You look like you're young enough to have been in Vietnam. You ever smell that smell?"

"No, I haven't," I said. "I missed Vietnam. I was in the Army from '61 to '63. I was sent down to Fort Opalocha near Miami during the Cuban Crisis when we still thought we might have to fight down there. We guarded all that equipment they flew in for a possible invasion. But that's the closest I got to combat."

"Well, I was at Anzio and I fought in North Africa, too," the man said, his large, fallow face sweating profusely now. He wore thick glasses that distorted his eyes and he had a large, slack mouth when he paused from his vigorous talk. His breath was a diatribe. "I can still smell those bodies and see them littered everywhere. I've even walked on bodies, the ground was so thick with them.... I was a tank man, though. I guess I've crunched over miles of bodies in a tank... I was wounded twice myself. I got blown out of the top of my tank once. Some German artillery splattered the back of it. I was up in the turret, just looking around. Didn't think there was any enemy for fifty miles out in that desert. I got shrapnel all in my back. Spent three months in the hospital."

"That's hell," I said.

"Yeah, you ain't kidding," the man said. "Then I went back and one day I'm walking about five yards behind my tank partner and he steps on a land mine. Killed him, of course. All it did to me was take off my big toe on my left foot

and the three middle toes on my right."

The man held up a heavy clump of brown shoe for my inspection. It was his right foot, but I could not see anything about it that indicated the loss of the three toes on that foot. But perhaps the man thought that something about it revealed his injury.

"That's really rough," I said, wishing I could say something more meaningful and sympathetic.

"So I've had just six toes and this bad back since World War II," he said. "And, see, I used to be a good athlete. I played football in college."

"Oh, yeah, who did you play for?"

"Wisconsin."

"That's fine," I said, although I didn't know much about Wisconsin football, being a Southeastern Conference fan.

"But I hadn't been much good since 1942. This bad back and all...."

"Do you get anything from the government for all that's happened to you?"

"I get two-hundred-and-fifty dollars a month and I pay that back in Social Security and taxes."

"Damn. That's not much."

"Yeah, and you know I see these bastards on welfare—I mean the ones there ain't anything wrong with—and...well, you know what I think ought to be done with them?"

"What?"

"I think they ought to be carried out in the ocean and drowned. That's what I think."

"Yeah, well..."

"But to get back to the War—what makes me do damn made is that nobody much even remembers it anymore. I mean most of these young people that come down here couldn't care less about what we older guys had to do....It's shocking, I tell you....Who was that little English model back in the sixties? The little skinny broad?"

"Twiggy?"

"Yeah, that's the one. Twiggy... Well, I read this interview with her once in which it came out that this Twiggy didn't even know who Churchill had been. And that old son-of-a-bitch just about saved England single-handed. Can you believe she didn't know who he was?"

I chuckled and said, "Oh, yeah, I can. Now my wife, for example...she was born in 1944 and there's a lot that happened before then that she just doesn't know anything about. I mean she gets mixed up sometimes about who all we fought in World War I and then in World War II. Gets those wars confused sometimes...And yet she's basically a good person and she has sympathy for those people—like yourself—that suffered and sacrificed in World War II."

"But most of them down here don't give a damn. I know that for sure."

"Well, I guess a lot of the people born since World War II just don't have much sense of history. And now everything moves so fast—and there's been two bad wars since World War II."

"You're right about that. That Vietnam thing was awful. You know, if I had had a son draft age I would of told him not to participate in a *no-win war*. At least I know what I would of done. I wouldn't have gone to Canada. Hell, no! I would of just told Uncle Sam that I wouldn't fight in a no-win war. I would of stayed right here. In jail or whatever. But I'd of told the people in the government that if they decided to fight to win, then I would put on the uniform and do my part. That's what I would of done."

"Well," I said, "I expect Vietnam was the worst war to be in ever. So confused and all. Yet they had to kill and be killed just like y'all did at Anzio. And then that damn jungle, the booby traps, the insects...That reminds me. I've got several friends up in Birmingham, Alabama, that fought in World War II. Guys about your age. One of them was in the Pacific theater and he'll still get up from an easy chair while he's sippin' bourbon and walk all the way across a room to squash a spider or even an ant. That's how much he hates insects—because they nearly drove him nuts in the Pacific. He was at Tarawa Beachhead, I think. And I know he fought in Guam. He was only seventeen when he went in the Marines and he was over there shootin' Japs before he was eighteen. It's been the biggest experience in his life."

"It was *the biggest one* in mine," the man said, the distorted eyes in the thick glasses getting a far-away look in them. "But nobody much cares about that now."

"Did you see the movie they made about MacArthur?" I asked.

"No, but I saw *Patton*. In fact, that's the last movie I've seen."

"Why's that? Didn't you like it?"

"Oh, yeah. I loved it. See, I fought with Patton. I'm a Patton man."

"He was a hell of a guy."

"Sure was. They don't make them like that anymore."

"Well, a lot of people saw that movie. Maybe it made some of them think."

"I doubt it," he said.

"You know, though, the guy I work for is kind of a rough character and yet one time when somebody asked me what I thought about this guy, I told them that I like anybody that fought in World War II."

"That was a good answer," he said.

"Yeah, I was glad I thought of it."

My wife came back up to the counter now. I sensed that she was ready to leave and go on and get the groceries we had set out for. She picked out one of the Venus Fly-Traps from off the tray and I gave the man two dollars.

"Want anything else?" I asked my wife.

"No, that's it, I guess."

"Well, goodbye," I said to the man, "and good luck."

"Goodbye," he said.

We started towards our car but after about five steps the man called out to me: "Don't forget the sons-of-a-bitches don't give a damn! They won't remember what you've done."

I spun around and waved to him and I said: "Some of us *do remember* and *we are grateful* for what you did."

I thought I saw tears come into the man's eyes but perhaps it was only sunlight playing on his thick glasses or the beads of sweat that poured down his now florid face because he was sweating as if he were still doing battle. At least I saw his slack mouth break into a momentary grin.

My wife and I went on and got into the car.

"The poor bastard thinks that nobody cares anymore," I said, cranking up.

"I'm sorry," my wife said. "I just didn't feel like hearing about the rotting corpses and the stinking bodies and all."

"I know. That's all right."

As we pulled away I looked back one last time and saw the six-toed veteran still standing among his plants like a large, fat spider caught in a Venus Fly-Trap.

each day at dawn

we saw the sun
weave its morning life
through silk openings in a grass mat

outside
autumn colour
crowds the sky

and beyond the numbness
of crisp
virgin
air

echo the rustling
of the day creatures
disturbing the leaves
so gently layered in the night

eyes wide with wonder
the children next door
watch us from their tree fortress

as for hours we lay
flat against each other
four brown eyes
aglow

as for hours
we lay succulent
in a sea of laughter

our shadows before us
pulsating.

—D.M. Petrizzi





Old eyes
look deep
and scratch
my soul

—Anne Johnson Leech

The Cross

I hang upon a cross in all my sin
A thief am I, and rotten to the core
Too late, too late, are hopes I may repent
I've tossed away the life that I adored.
My pain is just a pebble in my path.
for judgment do I fear with growing shame
Above, I hear God restless in his wrath
The rolling thunder seems to call my name.
Oh to loose these ropes, and just climb down
For now I find it hard to catch my breath
An angry mob approaches from the town
Some other soul has come to face his death.
But what!?

Could death play tricks upon my ears?
Could death provide illusions for my eyes?
Did someone say 'tis Jesus who draws near?
And do I see the figure of the Christ?!
What fools are these, that sentence Him to this?
How vulgarly the crowd chants 'crucify'
By fate I am deserving—but not Him!
If He is damned, then how much more am I?

My eyes betray my thoughts to look away
I see them drive the nails into His flesh
His precious blood is spilt this rueful day
—The wounds they've made, will stay forever fresh.
They raise His cross and drop it in the ground
Where nails had pierced, I hear His body tear
But in His pain He never makes a sound
Except to pray what seems a futile prayer.

They mock, they jeer, they taunt, they curse His name
They spit, they stab, they throw in seething hate
Like animals, they curse Him without shame
They shout, "O'King, make angles change your fate."
But through their shouts I hear Him say, "Father,
Forgive them, for they know not what they do."
I realize now, for Him, Heaven's assured
—Oh Lord, if I can have salvation, too—
Then like a voice the answer comes to me
Upon the cross, hangs salvation I seek
—Upon His cross, hangs my eternity—
I take a breath, then so humbly I speak;
"My Lord," Ask I, "Thou please rememberest me."
The wind has calmed, I hear now not a sound
His eyes catch mine, and through His agony
I see in Him, a love which knows no bounds.
And then He speaks as if He feels no pain "This day, with me, shalt thou see paradise."
—I feel my tears like gently falling rain—
"It's Finished!" Now He shouts, and then He dies....

But in His death, I feel new life begin
The pain that taunts me now will soon be gone
I hang upon my cross without a sin,
And wait for Christ to come and lead me Home.

—Mike Donahue

Oakbowery

by Issac Joyner and Amy Dawes

It was the antebellum birthplace of the men that ran the state... but then the railroad didn't come.

"They topped the ridge and the white house reared its perfect symmetry before her, tall columns, wide verandas, flat roofs.... The wide curving driveway was full of saddle horses and carriages and guests. Grinning negroes, excited as always at a party, were leading the animals to the barnyard to be unharnessed and unsaddled for the day. The wide hall which ran from front to back of the house was swarming with people and the O'Hara carriage drew up at the front steps. Scarlett...."

Well, maybe there has never been anyone like Scarlett, but the rest of the scenario from "Gone with the Wind" could easily have taken place not fifteen minutes from Auburn in the all but forgotten town of Oakbowery. Oakbowery, apparently, was once a thriving center of Southern aristocracy, a model of gracious living in the Old South.

Attracted by the richest and most productive alluvial soils in the county, wealthy, educated planters from South Carolina settled into the area in 1828, bringing slaves, horses, oxen, and money. It took them about 20 years to hew Oakbowery from a wilderness into a town. By the time Oakbowery was incorporated in 1850 it boasted two colleges, a Methodist church, and a score of antebellum mansions in the popular Greek revival style. There was also a post office, blacksmith's shop, tailor, milliner, shoe shop, cotton gin, several other businesses, and a slave market. In order to educate their sons, the settlers established the East Alabama Masonic Institute or "Men's College" in 1848. For their daughters the Oakbowery Female Institute was established in 1849. A women's college was so unusual at the time, it brought at least fifty families into the area who sought to educate their daughters.

At the Oakbowery Methodist Church, the ladies sat on the right, the gentlemen sat on the left, and the slaves sat in the balcony above. The church, which burned in 1896, featured plush red carpet, burnished walnut interior and two crystal chandeliers. The steeple bell tolled for services, fire alarms, and funerals.

The surrounding plantations were



rambling, self-sufficient examples of the economy that ruled in cotton country. Some were as large as 4,000 acres and some, like the house of James R. Dowdell, who became an Alabama Supreme Court Justice, had as many as 100 slaves.

The aristocracy in Oakbowery produced other notable sons, including Georgia Governor John M. Slaton, Alabama Governor William J. Samford, James F. Dowdell congressman and president of East Alabama Male College (later Auburn University), and General Robert Lee Bullard, the war hero who was second in command to General John J. Pershing in World War II.

During the decade immediately preceding the Civil War, Oakbowery reigned as the social and cultural center of the area. But by the turn of the century, Oakbowery had changed. Changed because of the Civil War, because many citizens migrated away, and because the railroad came to East Alabama but not Oakbowery.

Many of the town's young men went off to the Civil War, but few returned.

And after the war cotton could not profitably be grown on plantations with no slave labor and on soil depleted from too many cotton crops. So as new lands opened up in the southwest many citizens migrated west as the Methodist Church's rolls show that many members were "dismissed by letter" because they had "gone to Texas." Other citizens went to Opelika because in about 1896 a railroad from Montgomery to Columbus was built. The railroad ran through the then-small village of Opelika instead of through Oakbowery because the geography of this area meant the Opelika route was cheaper to build than an Oakbowery route would have been. Oakbowery was connected to Opelika by a spur line until 1905 when a rail company taking over the line cancelled the unprofitable route.

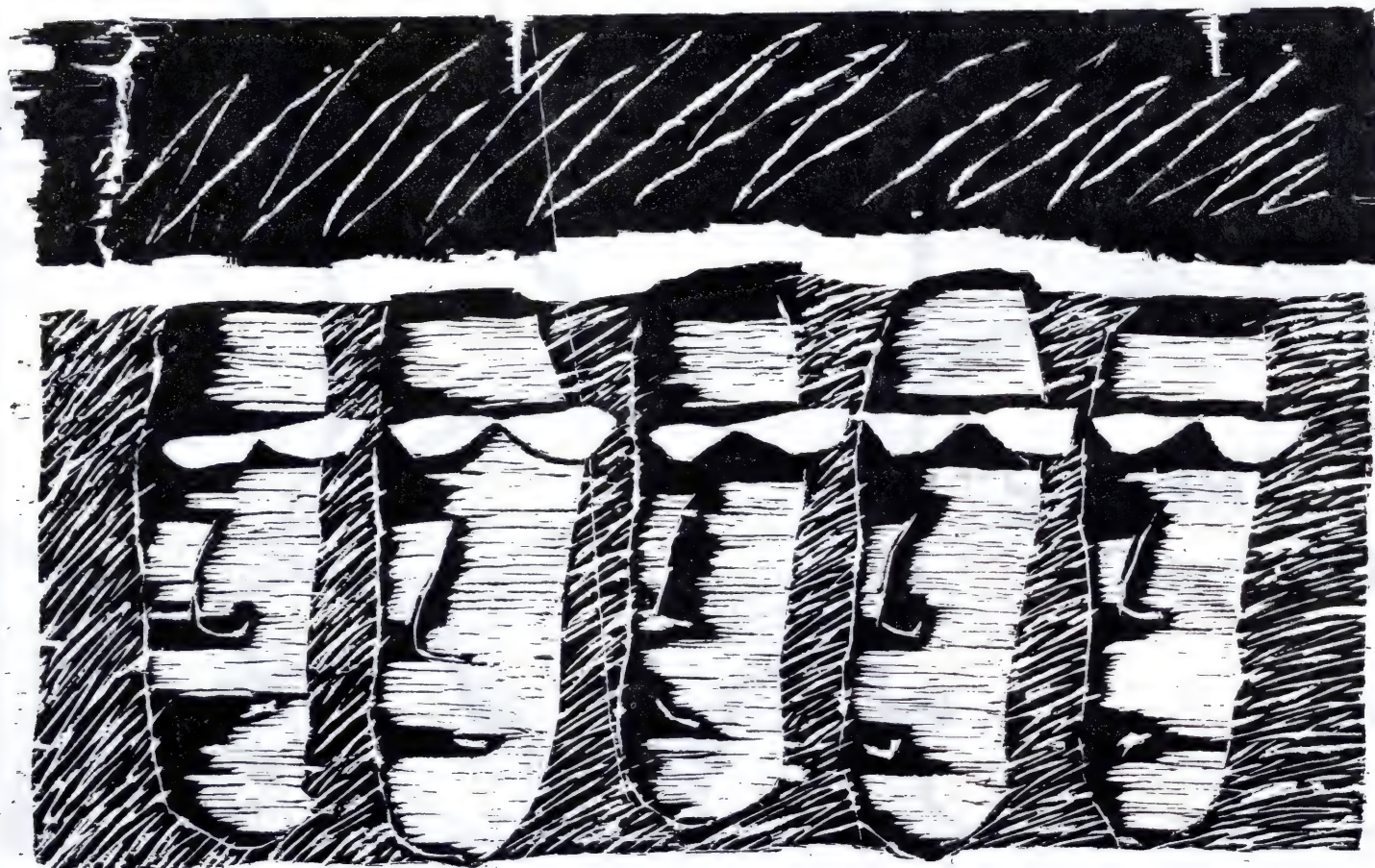
Oakbowery has not completely disappeared, in fact it has experienced a small revival. All of the remaining old mansions have been or are being restored by some contemporary homesteaders. Driving north on U.S. 431 you can see Oakbowery's cash grocery and gas



station, the rebuilt Methodist church, and a sign for "Plantation Antiques." The antique shop is just behind a restored mansion on a side road. Further down this road are three more old homes. Another mansion is off 431 hidden by woods. The cash grocery stands where the center of town was. Just

across the highway is the site of the former slave market. Down the Gold Hill road that intersects 431 is the site of the Men's College; a Christian-Methodist church is now there. Oakbowery cemetery is a mile down the road from the college site. Just past the cash grocery is the rebuilt Methodist church.

Where the parsonage now stands the woman's college once stood. In the church's front lawn near 431 is a Chattahoochee Valley Historical Society marker commemorating Oakbowery's past and illustrious sons.



Damnation

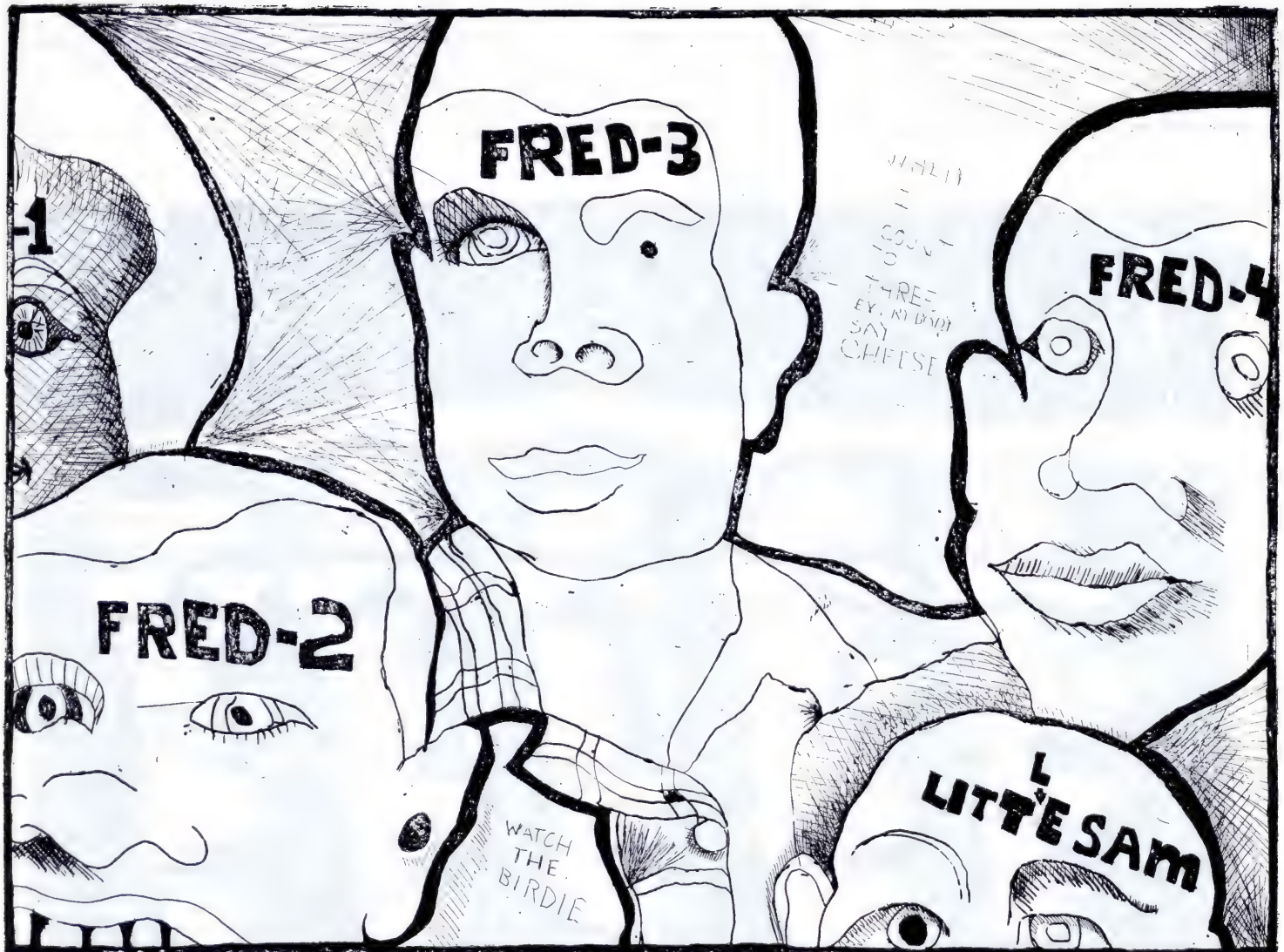
Picture hold me with your stare
why cast you such an evil glare
haunt some other soul—not me
for I'm of low mentality
and can't be bothered with your eyes
that strip me bare with all my lies
and foolish dreams of what could be
that turn me from society
oh leave me, let me guard what's mine
you are the cause of my decline!
(Yes, picture with the eyes so vile
I see myself within their smile.)

Mike Donahue

conversation between two deaf mutes

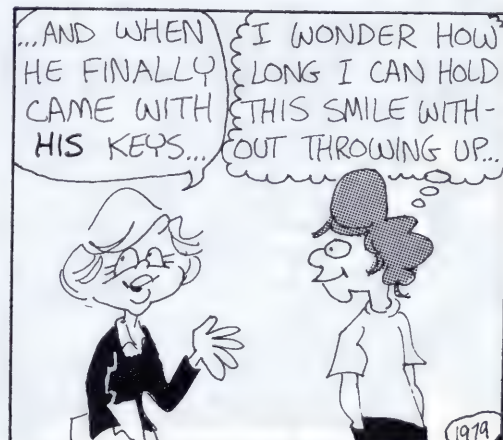
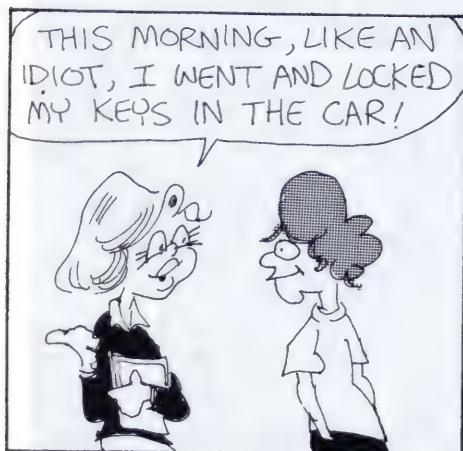
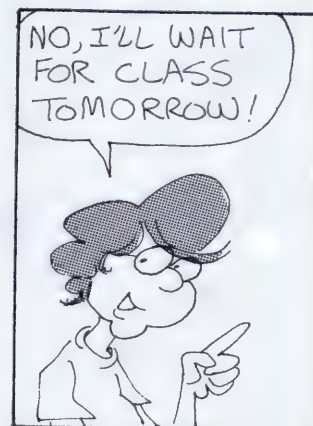
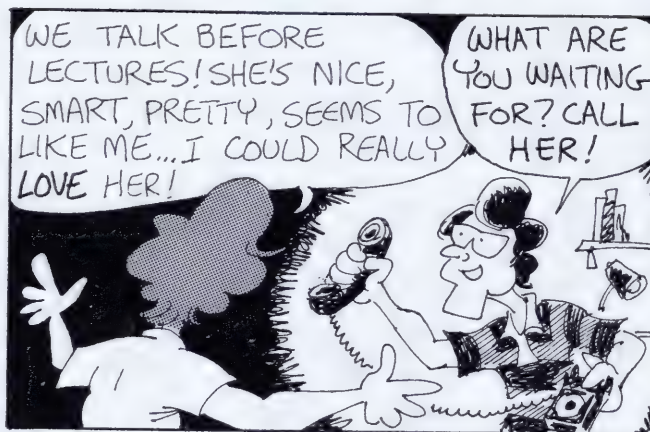
their hands rise like birds
migrating south
and fall like stones
through silent water.
their whole bodies consort with speech
beyond our comprehension,
like someone suddenly healed
bursting into tongues.
they speak in spite of their dumb deafness,
like you, like me.

A.J. Wright

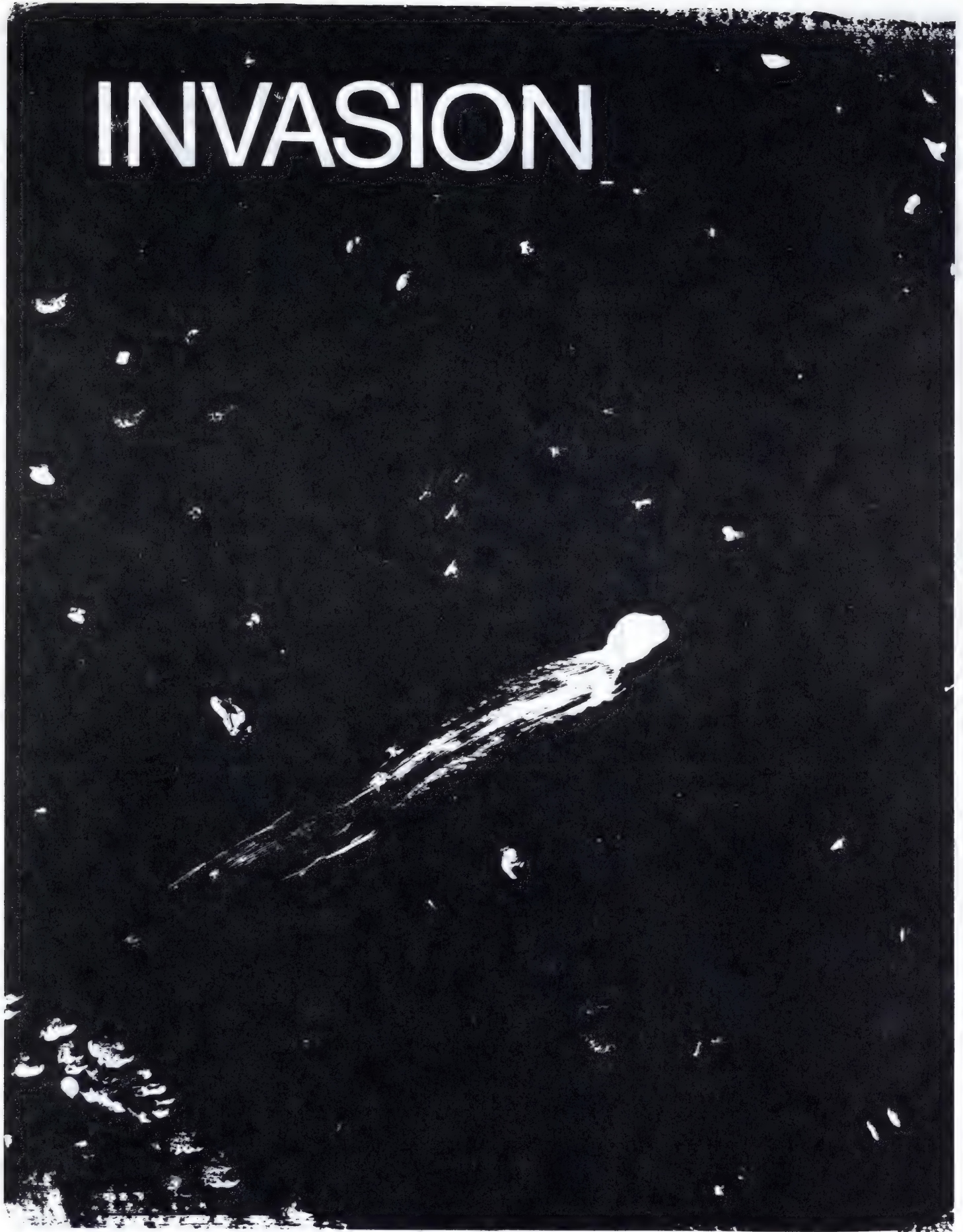


FENTON FARNSWORTH TURNS ON THE CHARM!

by Bill Holbrook



INVASION



by Chuck Anschutz

Ben hung up the kitchen phone and sat down at the table to watch his mother and Grandma Mable fix dinner. He picked up an apple from the bowl of fruit which centered the table, took a bite and put it back.

"Ma, Roy Higgins is coming over for a while," Ben said. "Doubt he'll stay for supper though."

"Well, you know any of your high school friends are welcome anytime," said his mother.

"I think it's lovely that you can have friends come over and visit," said Grandma Mable. "You know, in my day, a child couldn't hardly see a friend if he lived out in the country like this. Kids back then didn't drive trucks like they do today."

Ben rolled his eyes. Grandma Mable was a big, fat, old woman and her back was facing Ben. He watched her huge behind wiggle as she peeled potatoes.

"Well I guess we sure are lucky to live in the 1970's," Ben said dryly.

Ma, sensing rudeness, turned from the roast she was preparing and glared at Ben.

"I don't want to sit here and watch Mable's butt wiggle anyway," Ben thought to himself as he left the table and headed out the door towards the porch. There, Grandpa was sitting in his rocker gazing up at the stars. His long white hair, which overlapped his collar by about an inch, glistened in the moonlight.

"Haven't seen one yet, have ya Granpa?" asked Ben. Grandpa looked around, having heard the voice but not the question. His wrinkled expression asked Ben to repeat.

"Said ya haven't seen one yet, have ya?" the boy asked a little louder. Grandpa shook his head and assumed his star-gazing pose again. Ben smiled and looked towards the sky himself. Grandpa had been looking for UFOs for as long as Ben could remember. He couldn't understand how Grandma Mable could put up with the old bird. All he ever did was sit out and look for UFOs at night and sleep during the day. And then, of course, he would watch "I Dream of Jeannie" reruns right before dinner.

Ben noticed Grandpa's hair creep up his collar as his head bowed forward. "Grandpa?" Ben said as he leaned forward. The old man sucked in a tremendous snore and then let out a whistle.

The old pick-up truck that came bouncing up the drive-way caught Ben's attention but didn't interrupt Grandpa's sleep. It was Roy, Ben's rowdy high school friend with the bad reputation. The truck door slammed and Roy hopped up to the porch, banging the heels of his boots on the wood. Grandpa woke with a start.

"Jeannie on yet," he mumbled. Ben looked at his watch.

"Not for fifteen minutes, Grandpa," he said. Grandpa settled back into the rocker and gazed back up at the stars. In minutes the old timer's head was down again.

"Boy are we going to have fun tonight," said Roy. "How long till you have to eat dinner?"

"Oh, we got about an hour, I guess," Ben said. He looked suspiciously at Roy.

"Good, come look in my truck," Roy said. "This is going to be a blast."

Ben peered into the back of Roy's truck but didn't understand what his friend was up to. Roy had three cartons of aluminum foil and a long thin box resting along the inside of the truck.

"Your Grandpa still looking for interplanetary aircraft?" Roy asked. Ben nodded. "What I got here in this box is the biggest rocket the Airliner Model Rocket Company makes," he smiled. "I'm going to shoot this thing off over yonder

near the hill and scare the pacemaker off your Grandpa, Elmer,"

Ben took a breath. "I don't know. He's an old man and..."

"Oh, come on, Ben," Roy interrupted. "The old fart's been looking for UFOs for thirty years, probably, and hasn't seen nothing but airplanes and a weather balloon so far. Look, he'll probably be dead before too much longer and he..."

"Roy! Now don't go killing him off when he ain't even sick," Ben came back.

"He's 95 years old, Ben," said Roy. "I'd say he's gone in two years. I'd like to see a little satisfaction in his eyes before he keels over."

"OK, OK," Ben said. "I guess it would be fun. But what's with the foil?"

"That's the best part," Roy came back. "You see I wrap myself up in the stuff and a couple of minutes after I shoot off the rocket, I come dancing out in the front yard, give him a thrill and run back. It'll be a classic."

Ben smiled at the thought and looked up at his sleeping Grandfather.

Just then big Grandma Mable kicked open the screen door.

"Jeannie's on!" she yelled in a loud, high-pitched voice. Grandpa struggled to his feet as quick as he could and whistled the show's theme song as he followed his huge wife back into the house.

"Ok," Ben said. "You go out and get things ready. Grandpa will be back out in his rocker for about another half hour between TV and dinner. I'll clap my hands twice as a signal for you to set off the rocket."

"Great!" Roy declared. And he gathered his supplies in his arms and trotted across the front yard and into the bushes at the base of the hill. Ben went back inside, smiling.

Thirty minutes later Grandpa strolled out onto the porch, again whistling the "I Dream of Jeannie" theme. He settled back into the rocker and looked up into the sky. A few minutes later Ben came back out, checked out Grandpa to make sure he was awake and clapped his hands twice.

Suddenly the rocket darted from behind the hill and blazed across the sky. It exploded and sent red, white and blue sparkles over the barn. Grandpa's eyes were huge. It was the most awake Ben had ever seen his grandfather. Grandpa Elmer rose slowly to his feet and stared at the few remaining sparks floating down in the front yard. Then Roy, garbed almost completely in aluminum foil, sprang from the bushes and danced around, waving his arms in the air.

Elmer's mouth hung open. Ben watched as Grandpa fumbled around for the shotgun which was under the rocker. Ben thought about how lucky it was that the gun was empty. Grandma Mable never let Elmer near a loaded gun ever since he blew the weather balloon to smithereens back in 1967.

Ben looked down at his feet and smiled at the thought of government agents interrogating Elmer. Before Ben could realize what was happening, he looked up and saw Grandpa running out toward the invader with the unloaded shot-gun. Roy panicked when he saw the gun and took off for the back yard. Grandpa was hot on his path, running like a teenager.

Ma and Grandma Mable had confused looks on their faces as they came out to the porch to see what the commotion was about. Mable panicked when she saw the empty rocker. "Where's Elmer," she screamed. "Don't worry, Grandma," said Ben. "He just went around back."

Meanwhile Elmer was still in hot pursuit of Roy. They had made it to the back yard and were headed for the well. Unfortunately the heavy layer of aluminum foil which had once covered Roy's forehead was now over his eyes and he didn't know that. As he hit brick surrounding the well his upper torso buckled over. Elmer's poor eyesight limited what he saw to a pair of silver covered boots disappearing into the

well.

"Damn spacemen," yelled Grandpa. He cocked his gun, pointed the barrel into the dark well, closed his eyes and pulled the trigger. When nothing happened he grabbed the nearest thing to him, an elderly gray cat shivering and clinging to the tiny roof over the well, and threw her down into the darkness.

A tremendous "Haaaalp" blared from the well.

"Take that," yelled Grandpa. "The most fiercest animal on the face of the earth."

Grandpa thought of where might find some shotgun shells and darted for the back door of the house. Before he could make it in, he ran smack into Grandma Mable going the other way. Elmer bounced backwards but sprang right back towards the door.

"Out of my way, Mable, we got spacemens to contend with," he barked. Mable grabbed her husband's shoulders and shook.

"What's going on with you?" she shouted. "What is this craziness you're talking?"

She took a long smell of him and looked him in the eye.

"You haven't been smoking marijuana again, have you Elmer?" she said.

She didn't wait for an answer but dragged him into the house and grabbed the shotgun from his hands. She called for her daughter.

"Reeba, I think he's been smoking marijuana again. He keeps talking about spacemen."

Ben and his mother quickly arrived in the kitchen and stared at Grandpa. Ben didn't know what to say so he remained quiet.

"We got spacemen," said Elmer. "I seen their spaceship in the sky and I chased one of 'em into the well."

"You sure it wasn't a weather balloon?" asked Reeba.

"No, I'm sure he's been smoking marijuana," said Mable.

"It's spacemen," said Grandpa.

Suddenly Ben realized what Grandpa had said.

"You chased one of them into the well?" he asked.

Grandpa nodded.

"Omygod," said Ben.

The back door suddenly swung open and Roy stood in the light, glaring at the small group gathered in the house. He was picking the last of the aluminum foil from his hair. His head was bloody from a cut on his forehead, and there were rows of red cat scratches on his cheek. His clothes were torn and he was standing in a peculiar way. His gaze went from everyone's faces down to his own right foot and everybody looked down with him. His boot was missing and his foot was very swollen. He looked back up first at Ben and then at Elmer. It was a stern, pissed-off look.

"Jesus," Elmer said softly, "It's the Higgins boy. The spacemen almost got the Higgins boy."

Elmer jumped up and darted for the kitchen. Mable and Reeba watched him leave the room and then looked back at Roy.

"What DID happen to you," asked Reeba.

Roy glanced at Ben then answered quickly. "I tripped," he said. "Tripped over the cat on the way up from the drive-way." He forced a smile. "Nothing serious," he said. Mable looked confused. "Then why are you in the back yard?" she asked.

"Uh,...chased the dang cat clear back to the well," he said. "And ...uh...ran into this piece of aluminum foil." He picked the foil from his hair.

"Well, what's your grandpa talking about, Ben," asked Reeba.

Ben forced a nervous smile. "He must be smoking that marijuana again." He glanced at Grandma Mable and nodded.

"I knew it," Mable blurted. "I just knew it."

Just then Elmer stomped through the back room with a hand full of shotgun shells. He grabbed the gun and had one shell loaded before he had made it out the door.

"Grandpa, wait," yelled Ben. But he didn't react quick enough. The old man fired both barrels into the well before Ben and Roy could grab him. A fluff of gray fur drifted up from the well. Roy grabbed the fur while Ben took the gun away from Elmer.

"You did it," said Roy. "This is genuine space fur, from one of those spacemen. Elmer, you just killed yourself an invader from outer space."

Grandpa grinned from ear to ear. He reached out and took the clump of fur from Roy. "Wish I could have got him before he roughed you up," Elmer said.

"Don't worry about it," Roy smiled and then he grimaced as he touched the wound on his forehead. Grandpa went into the house while Roy and Ben talked and laughed.

"It was worth it," said Roy. "I may look like sin and my foot just might be broken, but it was worth it."

Ben and Roy went back into the house. Things had settled down quite a bit and everybody seemed content as to what had just happened. Reeba was back putting the finishing touches on dinner which convinced Roy that he should stay and eat. Grandma Mable could be heard upstairs looking through Elmer's things for the marijuana.

The boys grinned. They looked out the screen door to the porch and saw Grandpa wide awake in his rocker gazing out at the stars. He had already scotch-taped the space fur to his old fishing cap and was wearing it proudly.





The Loner

There he goes
Walking as if he has a purpose
Staring at the cracks of the concrete
At the names and initials of people
He will never meet.
His thoughts are but passing
And his dreams are just clouds in the sky
As he journeys through life's journey
He never stops to wonder why.
He doesn't know what he's feeling
But he knows its just a feeling
That he hopes will hurry by.

And the loner walks
And no one sees
As he struggles
With each day's new disease:
A martyr for mediocrity
Enslaved to insecurity
And a victim of superiority
Just a mirror of the fashions
And the times.

And where will the loner be
When the night comes
And here are we?
He'll be there at home
For home is the home
Of a loner.

But one day he'll find a friend
And he'll keep him (or her)
'Till the very end.
And he won't be a loner again
Because of loner will never be a disowner
To a friend.

And when the loner dies
He'll still be wearing his disguise
By the way,
Did you know
He was a loner?

Dago Red

The Doors

Suddenly all the doors in the country kept on sliding. Or got off their hinges and moved out. They slid across the thoroughbred lawns. They sped up the slick streets and all got out of town. Some shot into the woods while other roamed freely in the valleys. Some mirrored the rivers and the wideness of the sky. There were inevitable casualties. Some shattered themselves on trees. Others fell into ravines. Still, it was better to be free. To be able to travel and to take their chances. The doors had gotten tired of being slid and shoved and pounded and slammed. Everything gets that way eventually.

—Fred Donovan Hill

Montgomery Morality

A city crackdown on sex shops
in the name of morals may
have been immorally
handled.

by Rick Harmon

A visitor to the city might have missed it.

Indeed, it was not even apparent to some of the city's residents.

But Montgomery officials noticed the "evil" and knew that they had to act quickly and forcibly, before it could corrupt and degrade the capitol city. This is the story of how actions these officials took did just that.

Montgomery isn't the type of town you normally associate with evil. The murder rate there is a little high. There is some street crime, and supposedly there is even a ghost that periodically visits one of the college campuses. But all in all Montgomery is a quiet Southern city—a city where most people see about as much evil as they do snow.

Then, a local PTA pointed out to public officials the "creeping evil" they had long overlooked—pornography.

Montgomery officials immediately declared a holy war against what they

called the city's "rapidly expanding sex shop industry." For the record, this industry had not yet reached Time Square proportions.

It consisted of one drive-in movie theatre, which showed discreetly censored adult films, three massage parlors on the outskirts of the city and three adult

An Analysis

book stores.

The reason the city officials threw in the "rapidly-expanding" before the sex-shop industry was probably because some of the businesses listed above were almost traditions in the city. One of the adult book stores, Jimmy's News Stand has been in operation for more than twenty years. The Jet, Montgomery's adult drive-in movie theatre, is not that much younger.

Maybe it was out of respect for the age and tradition of some of the other "sex shops," which caused the city to launch the first major attack in their holy war against the relatively new massage parlors.

Whatever the reason, the massage parlors suddenly found police cars parked outside their establishments. Often policemen stayed outside the massage parlors during every hour the parlors were in business, taking time out to make periodic "health and safety checks" inside the building.

The owner of one of the three massage parlors, The Tokyo House, told the Montgomery Journal that not only were patrol cars being parked on the private property of his business, but one had been parked so as to completely block the driveway to customers.

The owner said although he had made numerous calls to Montgomery Mayor Emory Folmar about the blocked drive, he could not get the police car moved.

On April 28, 1977, Folmar explained the policemen's renewed "observations of and visits to" the massage parlors. He

said, "We just want the city of Montgomery to know that we are taking a deep and abiding concern for the safety of our citizens."

He said nothing about the rights of these citizens.

The mayor's "deep and abiding concern" became even more apparent the next week, as police visits were stepped up on not only the massage parlors, but also adult book stores.

The three massage parlors sought legal action against the city. The massage parlors filed a motion in circuit court charging that the police department was harassing them by making countless visits to their establishments without showing either search or arrest warrants and by allowing police officers to hurl insults at the establishment's customers.

A similar case was entered in the same court by the manager of Forum Books, an adult bookstore located in downtown Montgomery. The manager, Steve Hess requested the courts prohibit the police from keeping squad cars outside his store, searching it without a warrant, and insulting his customers.

Circuit Judge Joe Phelps, who was not exactly known for his liberal leanings, heard both cases. After first denying Hess's request, on May 6 he denied the requests of the massage parlors. In explaining his decision Judge Phelps said the seaches and surveillance were justified because the business's "very nature justifies regulation and inspection."

A few days later Barbara Reeves, an employee at the Tokyo massage parlor told a Montgomery Advertiser reporter that policemen had walked into the rooms, where massages were being given and purposely shined flashlights into customer's faces.

Police had walked into one room, yelled, "This is a raid," and laughed when customers ran out, according to Reeves.

She also charged on police officer had made a loud announcement saying that her health certificate showed she had syphilis. She said the officer had then gone into her boss's office and lied about her, saying that she had been caught massaging customers while she was nude from the waist up. Although accusations were made about her to her employer, no charges were filed by the police against either Reeves or the Tokyo House.

When the massage parlor once again took its complaints to court, and asked that the police be restrained from interfering with the massage parlor's business, it was once again Judge Phelps that ruled against them.

Judge Phelps said he could find no evidence that the police officers had

acted in "anything but a responsible" manner or that they had made threats of an illegal or unreasonable nature.

Mayor Folmar summed up the issues much more succinctly, when he was called to the stand. "Sex shops should be run out of town," he said.

His purpose clearly stated, the mayor, with the help of city officials, began a campaign of harassment reminiscent of the Soviet Union's handling of dissidents. The major target of the bureaucratic attacks was the Forum Bookstore.

On March 10, 1977, one day after Phelps had ruled that Forum Bookstore was not being harassed, Fire Marshall Tommy Gunn inspected the bookstore. Gunn told Hess that his bookstore was not meeting the standards of the fire code. Gunn said the store needed new electrical wiring put in, and also needed a fire exit to be built.

He told Hess he would have to comply

with the repairs demands within the next three days, or the store would be closed down.

Gunn explained why he had given the store such a short length of time. Gunn said he had inspected the building in 1971, when it belonged to a different owner, and had told them about the same problems.

"Normally we would give them a little longer," said Gunn, "but we felt like giving them six years was long enough."

The day after Gunn had inspected the book store, Hess filed for an injunction in circuit court. Hess charged that the

fire code was being enforced arbitrarily and that Gunn had given him an unreasonable length of time in which to make the repairs.

On May 19 Circuit Judge William F. Thetford ruled there was no discriminatory use of the fire code, and that it was just coincidence that the book store was the only store in the area checked for fire hazards.

Judge Thetford did rule, however, that the fire inspector's decision to give the adult book store only three days for repairs and renovation was unreasonable, and ordered the book store to be given more time.

Hess had little time to be thankful though. On June 2 officers came to inspect his business and machines license. On June 3 the building inspector came to examine the store. On June 7 the city fire inspector came to make sure the book store had complied to their safety repair orders. On June 8, the electrical inspector came to the store to examine the book store's electrical wiring.

By June 15, Hess had installed a rear door and completed all the other changes which the fire inspector had requested. The city had begun to run out of officials to inspect the book store. It looked like Hess might have finally sailed clear of the city's harassment.

Then in mid-September, Alabama Power, the company that owned the parking lot into which the book store's emergency exit led, put up a no-trespassing sign directly in front of the



opening of the book store's fire exit, so that no one could get in or out.

With characteristic fairness, fire department inspectors told Hess that if he couldn't get the sign removed, he would have to construct another emergency fire exit. The hassles continued, until finally the rapidly expanding sex shop industry was broken.

Surprisingly it was not the city's high-handed bureaucratic hassles which broke the industry, but a weapon that seemed to have been originally forgotten by Montgomery officials—the law.

All three massage parlors, which used

to be on the outskirts of Montgomery, were put out of business when a law was passed which made it illegal for a sasseuse of the opposite sex to give a paid massage.

As of yet the adult book stores are still holding on, but are being heavily damaged by the work of John Bell, an assistant District Attorney in Montgomery, who succeeded in getting a tough new pornography law passed.

The new law makes selling pornography a misdemeanor. But the misdemeanor is punishable with a stiff fine and-or one year in prison. Bell is

working under the assumption, probably a correct one, that if he can obtain enough of these misdemeanor convictions, pornography will just not be profitable enough to continue in the capitol city.

Many will probably applaud the city of Montgomery's defeat of pornography. But if future battles like the must be won by sacrificing just enforcement of the law and individual freedom, it is doubtful that a quiet Southern city like Montgomery can survive many more such victories.





